



WILLIAM COWPER

C O W P E R

Poetry & Prose

With Essays by

HAZLITT & BAGEHOT

With an Introduction and Notes by

HUMPHREY S. MILFORD

O X F O R D

AT THE CLARENDON PRESS

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
AMEN HOUSE, E.C. 4
LONDON EDINBURGH GLASGOW
LEIPZIG NEW YORK TORONTO
MELBOURNE CAPE TOWN BOMBAY
CALCUTTA MADRAS SHANGHAI
HUMPHREY MILFORD
PUBLISHER TO THE
UNIVERSITY

Impression of 1930
First edition, 1921

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS, OXFORD
BY JOHN JOHNSON, PRINTER TO THE UNIVERSITY

CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	5
CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE	9
HAZLITT ON COWPER	11
BAGEHOT ON COWPER	17
SELECTIONS FROM POETRY	57
Retirement	58
The Sofa	61
The Time-piece	64
The Winter Evening	66
The Shrubbery	71
The Nightingale and Glow-worm	72
Boadicea	73
Verses supposed to be written by Alexander Selkirk during his solitary abode in the Island of Juan Fernandez	75
On the Loss of the <i>Royal George</i>	77
The Diverting History of John Gilpin	78
Epitaph on a Hare	86
The Poplar-Field	88
The Dog and the Water-Lily	88
On the Receipt of my Mother's Picture out of Norfolk	90
The Retired Cat	93
Epitaph on Fop	97
An Epitaph	97
Sonnet to Mrs. Unwin	98
On a Spaniel called Beau	98
Beau's Reply	99
To Mary	100
The Castaway	102
SELECTIONS FROM LETTERS	105
NOTES	185

INTRODUCTION

WHY is Cowper still read? Not for his outworn system of theology, nor for his thought; in nature-poetry Wordsworth far surpassed him; his lyrics pale in the light of Keats, Shelley, Tennyson, Browning; Byron has shown how satire should be written. And yet Cowper remains a fixed star, shining as steadily now as he shone when his first volume appeared nearly 140 years ago. At first his popularity may have owed something to his connexion with Newton and the Evangelical party, but that special cause has long since ceased to operate in his favour, and his insistence on certain definite dogmas tends to repel instead of attract most of his modern readers. It is true, too, that his two volumes appeared (in 1782 and 1785) at a barren time, and in consequence gained an immediate and almost undisputed hearing; but this is now only of historical interest, and does not explain his continued popularity.

He has been less subject to changes of fashion than almost any other English poet; he was not neglected or scorned during his lifetime; nor put on such a lofty pinnacle that the next generation could do no less than pull him down; nor eclipsed and rediscovered. In the main he was appreciated at once for his proper qualities and in fit measure, and there has been no need for revaluation of either.

Such discussion as there has been during the last century has fastened on personal details of his life, of no importance to an appreciation of his writings: for instance, the influence of Newton on his state of mind, and his relations with Mrs. Unwin and Lady Austen. There are no mysteries left to be cleared up; Newton was not the cause of his

madness, but was the worst possible adviser for a man of Cowper's temperament ; Cowper was engaged to be married to Mrs. Unwin, and did not marry her because an attack of madness prevented him, and he quarrelled with Lady Austen because Mrs. Unwin was jealous of her.

It was the friendliness and amiability of Cowper's character shining in everything that he wrote, prose or verse, which endeared him a hundred years ago and endear him to-day. Even when he scolds, his anger is like that of the squirrel in *The Task*, 'insignificantly fierce.' His satires, in spite of Hazlitt's commendation of them, are ineffective, and would have sunk into deeper oblivion than Churchill's had they not been buoyed up by his other writings. No doubt he sincerely deplored horse-racing, cock-fighting, dancing, public schools and all the other evils against which he declaims in *Progress of Error, Retirement*, and the rest. But he never knew much about most of the abuses that he attacked, and what little he once knew had become dim when he 'commenced author' at the age of fifty-one. He had an adequate income, plenty of leisure, and wanted some regular occupation to pass the time and to keep off the dreadful imaginations which were never far distant and which finally took complete possession of him. Devout Christian as he was, and spiritually directed by the converted slave-trader and fierce saviour of souls, John Newton, his first poems were inevitably written as moral and religious tracts, and as inevitably are now almost unreadable, except for a few passages, where the satirist is lost in the kindly observer of nature and man.

Unexpectedly successful with his late-born volume, Cowper cast about for a subject for a new poem. Lady Austen laughingly told him to choose the sofa on which he was then sitting. He at once complied, and into the poem thus casually begun he poured all the treasures of

his eye and heart. As Bagehot remarks, Cowper is the most English of poets; and nowhere in English poetry is there a more faithful report of plain everyday sights and occurrences, described in loving detail and with the eye on the object, never degenerating into a mere catalogue, but full of insight into the essence of English country life and continually enlivened with quiet humour.

It is difficult to see why Bagehot placed Cowper in the school of Pope. Certainly no poem is less like Pope than *The Task*, unless it be *John Gilpin* or the *Loss of the Royal George*. Cowper could not polish a couplet or barb an epigram, like Pope; Sainte-Beuve rightly called him 'un des pères du réveil de la poésie anglaise'. If he has not generally the 'masses'—the breadth—which Sainte-Beuve remarked in Thomson, his details are more accurately and affectionately noted. His ploughmen and carters and postmen are real people, going about their daily concerns in snow and dirt, as well as under summer skies. His hares and spaniels, his goldfinches and glow-worms appear as natural in his occasional poems as in what Coleridge called his 'divine chit-chat', his incomparable letters. Cowper's life, from his forty-second year at any rate, was almost devoid of exciting incident; and yet he delights us with his account of a walk to the Peasant's Nest, a game with his hares, or the fitting-up of his greenhouse; while the visit of a candidate for Parliament, a fire at Olney, or a balloon-ascent in the Throckmortons' grounds, affords material for some of the most attractive letters ever written.

Every one who reads, or even dips into, Cowper's poems or letters becomes and remains his friend. We should like to have drunk a dish of tea with Cowper, Mrs. Unwin, and Lady Austen, while the trio was still harmonious, and to have heard him read *Tom Jones* aloud afterwards while the two ladies knitted. We sympathize with his excitement

at the arrival of a barrel of oysters or a dozen bottles of madeira. We almost feel that we could have written *John Gilpin* or *The Retired Cat* ourselves 'if we had had the mind'.

And yet this must not be the last word about Cowper. The materials of his poetry, as of his letters, are plain, simple, easily intelligible to the ordinary reader. He does not rant, nor philosophize, nor soar into the empyrean; he is no metrical experimenter; even his subjects are often chosen for him by others—Newton, Mrs. Unwin, Lady Austen. And yet—from these plain, almost bare, materials, using no artifices or adornment, he suddenly produces sublime poems, such as the *Sonnet to Mrs. Unwin*, *Lines on my Mother's Picture*, and the *Loss of the Royal George*, which Palgrave long ago said was a trial-piece of a reader's taste. The ordinary reader is justified in his faith.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

- 1731. Cowper born at Great Berkhamstead (Nov. 20).
- 1738. At Dr. Pitman's school.
- 1739-40. At the house of Mr. Disney the oculist.
- 1741-48. At Westminster School.
- 1745. Has smallpox, which cures his affection of the eyes.
- 1748. Entered at Middle Temple ; first extant poem, *On the Heel of a Shoe*, written.
- 1749-51. Articled to Mr. Chapman, a solicitor. In love with his cousin, Theodora Cowper (d. 1825).
- 1752. First attack of melancholy.
- 1754. Called to the Bar.
- 1756. Contributes five papers to *The Connoisseur*.
- 1759. Commissioner of Bankrupts, at £60 a year.
- 1763. Offer of Clerkship of Journals of House of Lords, resulting in attempted suicide and attack of madness. Removed to Dr. Cotton's asylum at St. Albans.
- 1763-65. At St. Albans. Resigns his commissionership.
- 1766-67. At Huntingdon with the Unwins.
- 1767. At Olney with Mrs. and Miss Unwin, where he lived until 1786. Beginning of friendship with Newton (b. 1726, d. 1807).
- 1771. Begins to write Olney Hymns.
- 1772-3. Engagement to marry Mrs. Unwin, broken off by third attack of madness. Attempts suicide.
- 1779. Olney Hymns published.
- 1780. Begins to write *Progress of Error and Truth*, as well as many occasional poems.
- 1781. First meeting with Lady Austen (d. 1802).
- 1782. Publication of first volume of poems (February). Writes *John Gilpin*.
- 1783. Begins *The Task*.
- 1784. Begins to translate Homer.
- 1785. Second volume of poems, containing *The Task*, published (July).
- 1786. Moves to Weston, where he lives until 1795.

1791. Translation of Homer published, for which he receives £1,000.
Begins work on edition of Milton's Poems.
1792. Romney paints his portrait. Pays visit to Hayley at Earham.
1793. Increasing melancholy, never wholly thrown off.
1794. Pension of £300 a year granted, mainly through Hayley's efforts.
1795. Leaves Weston and eventually settles at East Dereham (September 1796).
1796. Death of Mrs. Unwin (December).
1799. Wrote *The Castaway*, his last original poem.
1800. Death (April 25). Buried at East Dereham.

HAZLITT ON COWPER

COWPER . . . lived at a considerable distance of time after Thomson, and had some advantages over him, particularly in simplicity of style, in a certain precision and minuteness of graphical description, and in a more careful and leisurely choice of such topics only as his genius and peculiar habits of mind prompted him to treat of. The Task has fewer blemishes than the Seasons ; but it has not the same capital excellence, the 'unbought grace' of poetry, the power of moving and infusing the warmth of the author's mind into that of the reader. If Cowper had a more 10 polished taste, Thomson had beyond comparison a more fertile genius, more impulsive force, a more entire forgetfulness of himself in his subject. If in Thomson you are sometimes offended with the slovenliness of the author by profession, determined to get through his task at all events ; in Cowper you are no less dissatisfied with the finicalness of the private gentleman, who does not care whether he completes his work or not ; and in whatever he does, is evidently more solicitous to please himself than the public. There is an effeminacy about him, which 20 shrinks from and repels common and hearty sympathy. With all his boasted simplicity and love of the country, he seldom launches out into general descriptions of nature ; he looks at her over his clipped hedges, and from his well-swept garden-walks ; or if he makes a bolder experiment now and then, it is with an air of precaution, as if he were afraid of being caught in a shower of rain, or of not being able, in case of any untoward accident, to make good his retreat home. He shakes hands with nature with a pair of fashionable gloves on, and leads 'his Vashti' forth to 30 public view with a look of consciousness and attention to

etiquette, as a fine gentleman hands a lady out to dance a minuet. He is delicate to fastidiousness, and glad to get back, after a romantic adventure with crazy Kate, a party of gypsies or a little child on a common, to the drawing-room and the ladies again, to the sofa and the tea-kettle—No, I beg his pardon, not to the singing, well-scoured tea-kettle, but to the polished and loud-hissing urn. His walks and arbours are kept clear of worms and snails with as much an appearance of *petit-maitre*-ship as of
10 humanity. He has some of the sickly sensibility and pampered refinements of Pope; but then Pope prided himself in them: whereas, Cowper affects to be all simplicity and plainness. He had neither Thomson's love of the unadorned beauties of nature, nor Pope's exquisite sense of the elegances of art. He was, in fact, a nervous man, afraid of trusting himself to the seductions of the one, and ashamed of putting forward his pretensions to an intimacy with the other: but to be a coward, is not the way to succeed either in poetry, in war, or in love! Still
20 he is a genuine poet, and deserves all his reputation. His worst vices are amiable weaknesses, elegant trifling. Though there is a frequent dryness, timidity, and jejune-ness in his manner, he has left a number of pictures of domestic comfort and social refinement, as well as of natural imagery and feeling, which can hardly be forgotten but with the language itself. Such, among others, are his memorable description of the post coming in, that of the preparations for tea in a winter's evening in the country, of the unexpected fall of snow, of the frosty morning
30 (with the fine satirical transition to the Empress of Russia's palace of ice), and, most of all, the winter's walk at noon. Every one of these may be considered as distinct studies, or highly-finished cabinet-pieces, arranged without order or coherence. I shall be excused for giving the last of them, as what has always appeared to me one of the most

feeling, elegant, and perfect specimens of this writer's manner :

The night was winter in his roughest mood ;
The morning sharp and clear. But now at noon
Upon the southern side of the slant hills,
And where the woods fence off the northern blast,
The season smiles, resigning all its rage,
And has the warmth of May. The vault is blue,
Without a cloud, and white without a speck
The dazzling splendour of the scene below. 10
Again the harmony comes o'er the vale ;
And through the trees I view th'embattled tow'r,
Whence all the music. I again perceive
The soothing influence of the wafted strains,
And settle in soft musings as I tread
The walk, still verdant, under oaks and elms,
Whose outspread branches over-arch the glade.
The roof, though movable through all its length,
As the wind sways it, has yet well suffic'd,
And, intercepting in their silent fall 20
The frequent flakes, has kept a path for me.
No noise is here, or none that hinders thought.
The redbreast warbles still, but is content
With slender notes, and more than half suppress'd.
Pleas'd with his solitude, and fitting light
From spray to spray, where'er he rests he shakes
From many a twig the pendant drops of ice,
That tinkle in the wither'd leaves below.
Stillness, accompanied with sounds so soft,
Charms more than silence. Meditation here 30
May think down hours to moments. Here the heart
May give a useful lesson to the head,
And Learning wiser grow without his books.
Knowledge and Wisdom, far from being one,
Have oft-times no connexion. Knowledge dwells
In heads replete with thoughts of other men :
Wisdom in minds attentive to their own.
Books are not seldom talismans and spells,
By which the magic art of shrewder wits
Holds an unthinking multitude enthrall'd. 40
Some to the fascination of a name

- Surrender judgment hood-wink'd. Some the style
 Infatuates, and through labyrinths and wilds
 Of error leads them, by a tune entranc'd.
 While sloth seduces more, too weak to bear
 The insupportable fatigue of thought,
 And swallowing therefore without pause or choice
 The total grist unsifted, husks and all.
 But trees and rivulets, whose rapid course
 Defies the check of winter, haunts of deer
 10 And sheep-walks populous with bleating lambs,
 And lanes, in which the primrose ere her time
 Peeps through the moss that clothes the hawthorn root,
 Deceive no student. Wisdom there, and truth
 Not shy as in the world, and to be won
 By slow solicitation, seize at once
 The roving thought, and fix it on themselves.

His satire is also excellent. It is pointed and forcible, with the polished manners of the gentleman and the honest indignation of the virtuous man. His religious
 20 poetry, except where it takes a tincture of controversial heat, wants elevation and fire. His Muse had not a seraph's wing. I might refer, in illustration of this opinion, to the laboured anticipation of the Millennium at the end of the sixth book. He could describe a piece of shell-work as well as any modern poet : but he could not describe the New Jerusalem so well as John Bunyan ;—nor are his verses on Alexander Selkirk so good as Robinson Crusoe. The one is not so much like a vision, nor is the other so much like the reality.

- 30 The first volume of Cowper's poems has, however, been less read than it deserved. The comparison in these poems of the proud and humble believer to the peacock and the pheasant, and the parallel between Voltaire and the poor cottager, are exquisite pieces of eloquence and poetry, particularly the last :

Yon cottager, who weaves at her own door,
 Pillow and bobbins all her little store ;

Content though mean, and cheerful if not gay,
 Shuffling her threads about the live-long day,
 Just earns a scanty pittance, and at night
 Lies down secure, her heart and pocket light.
 She, for her humble sphere by nature fit,
 Has little understanding, and no wit,
 Receives no praise ; but, though her lot be such,
 (Toilsome and indigent), she renders much ;
 Just knows, and knows no more, her Bible true—
 A truth the brilliant Frenchman never knew ; 10
 And in that charter reads with sparkling eyes
 Her title to a treasure in the skies.

O happy peasant ! O unhappy bard !
 His the mere tinsel, hers the rich reward ;
 He prais'd, perhaps, for ages yet to come,
 She never heard of half a mile from home :
 He lost in errors his vain heart prefers,
 She safe in the simplicity of hers.

His character of Whitefield, in the poem on Hope, is
 one of his most spirited and striking things. It is written 20
con amore :

But if, unblameable in word and thought,
 A man arise, a man whom God has taught,
 With all Elijah's dignity of tone,
 And all the love of the beloved John,
 To storm the citadels they build in air,
 To smite the untemper'd wall ('tis death to spare),
 To sweep away all refuges of lies,
 And place, instead of quirks, themselves devise,
 Lama Sabachthani before their eyes ; 30
 To show that without Christ all gain is loss,
 All hope despair that stands not on His cross ;
 Except a few his God may have impressed,
 A tenfold phrensy seizes all the rest.

These lines were quoted, soon after their appearance, by
 the Monthly Reviewers, to show that Cowper was no poet;
 though they afterwards took credit to themselves for
 having been the first to introduce his verses to the notice

of the public. It is not a little remarkable that these same critics regularly damned, at its first coming out, every work which has since acquired a standard reputation with the public.—Cowper's verses on his mother's picture, and his lines to Mary, are some of the most pathetic that ever were written. His stanzas on the loss of the *Royal George* have a masculine strength and feeling beyond what was usual with him. The story of John Gilpin has perhaps given as much pleasure to as many people as anything of 10 the same length that ever was written.

His life was an unhappy one. It was embittered by a morbid affection, and by his religious sentiments. Nor are we to wonder at this, or bring it as a charge against religion ; for it is the nature of the poetical temperament to carry everything to excess, whether it be love, religion, pleasure, or pain, as we may see in the case of Cowper and of Burns, and to find torment or rapture in that in which others merely find a resource from *ennui*, or a relaxation from common occupation.

BAGEHOT ON COWPER

It would be only a very pedantic critic who would attempt to separate the criticism on Cowper's works very widely from a narrative or outline of his life. Indeed, such an attempt would be scarcely intelligible. Cowper's poems are almost as much connected with his personal circumstances as his letters, and his letters are as purely autobiographical as those of any man well can be. If all other information as to Cowper had perished save what his poems contain, the attention of the critics would be diverted from the special examination of their interior characteristics to 10 a conjectural dissertation on the personal fortunes of the author. . . .

William Cowper, the poet, was born on the 26th November, 1731, at his father's parsonage, at Berkhamstead. Of his father, who was chaplain to the king, we know nothing of importance. Of his mother, who had been named Donne, and was a Norfolk lady, he has often made mention, and it appears that he regarded the faint recollection which he retained of her—for she died early—with peculiar tenderness. In later life, and when his sun was 20 going down in gloom and sorrow, he recurred eagerly to opportunities of intimacy with her most distant relatives, and clearly wished to keep alive the idea of her in his mind. That idea was not of course very definite ; indeed, as described in his poems, it is rather the abstract idea of what a mother should be than anything else ; but he was able to recognise her picture, and there is a suggestion of cakes and sugar-plums, which gives a life and vividness to the rest. Soon after her death he was sent to a school, kept by a man named Pitman, at which he always described 30 himself as having suffered exceedingly from the cruelty of one of the boys. He could never see him, or think of him,

he has told us, without trembling. And there must have been some solid reason for this terror, since—even in those days, when *τύπτω* meant I strike, and boy denoted a thing to be beaten—this juvenile inflicter of secret stripes was actually expelled. Next, Cowper, having shown symptoms of a weakness in the eyes, which remained with him through life, was consigned to the care of an oculist—a dreadful fate for even the most cheerful boy, and certainly not likely to cure one with any disposition to melancholy. Hardly, indeed, could the boldest mind, in its toughest hour of manly fortitude, endure to be domesticated with an operation chair. Thence he was transferred to Westminster, of which he has left us somewhat contradictory notices, according to the feeling for the time being uppermost in his mind. From several parts of the ‘*Tirocinium*’, or ‘*Review of Schools*’, it would certainly seem that he regarded the whole system of public school teaching, not only with speculative disapproval, but with the painful hatred of a painful experience. A thousand genial passages in his private letters, however, really prove the contrary; and in a changing mood of mind, the very poem which was avowedly written to ‘recommend private tuition at home’ gives some idea of school happiness.

Be it a weakness, it deserves some praise,
 We love the play-place of our early days;
 The scene is touching, and the heart is stone
 That feels not at that sight, and feels at none.
 The wall on which we tried our graving skill,
 The very name we carved subsisting still,
 30 The bench on which we sat while deep employed,
 Though mangled, hacked, and hewed, not yet destroyed;
 The little ones unbuttoned, glowing hot,
 Playing our games, and on the very spot,
 As happy as we once, to kneel and draw
 The chalky ring, and knuckle down at taw;
 To pitch the ball into the grounded hat,
 Or drive it devious with a dextrous pat;

The pleasing spectacle at once excites
Such recollections of our own delights,
That viewing it, we seem almost to obtain
Our innocent sweet simple years again.
This fond attachment to the well-known place
Whence first we started into life's long race,
Maintains its hold with such unfailing sway,
We feel it even in age, and at our latest day.

It is probably an insoluble problem to seek a suitable education for a morbidly melancholy mind. At first it seems a dreadful thing to place a gentle and sensitive nature in contact, in familiarity, and even under the rule of coarse and strong buoyant natures. Nor, in truth, should it be in general attempted. The certain result is present suffering, and the expected good is remote and disputable. Nevertheless, it is no artificial difficulty which we here encounter—none which we can hope by educational contrivances to meet or vanquish. The difficulty is in truth the existence of the world. It is the fact, that according to the constitution of the external world, the strong, the bold, the vigorous, and the buoyant, rise and rule ; and that the weak, the shrinking, and the timid, fall and serve. In after-life, in the actual commerce of men, even too in those pursuits in which from their quiet and tranquil nature, a still and gentle mind should seem to be under the least disadvantage, in philosophy and speculation, the strong and active, who have confidence in themselves and in their resolutions and their ideas, attain and retain dominion. It is idle to expect that this will not give great pain—that the shrinking and timid, who are often just as ambitious as others, will not repine—that the rough and strong will not often consciously inflict grievous oppression—will not still more often, without knowing it, cause to more tremulous minds a refined suffering which their coarser texture could never experience, which it does not sympathise with, or comprehend. Some time in life—

it is but a question of a very few years at most—this trial must be undergone. There may be a short time, more or less, of gentle protection and affectionate care, but the leveret grows old—the world waits at the gate—the hounds are ready, and the huntsman too, and there is need of strength, and pluck, and speed. Cowper, indeed, himself, as we have remarked, on a more attentive examination, does not seem to have really suffered particularly. In after years, as has also been said, when a dark cloud had passed
10 over him, he certainly did seem at times to exaggerate isolated days of melancholy and suffering, and fancy that the dislike which he entertained for the system of schools, by way of speculative principle, was in fact the result of a personal and painful experience. But, as we shall have (though we shall not, in fact, perhaps use them all) a thousand occasions to observe, he had, side by side with a morbid and melancholy humour, an easy nature, which was easily satisfied with the world as he found it, had a pleasure in the gaiety of others, and liked the sight of, and
20 sympathy with, the more active enjoyments which he did not care to engage in or to share. Besides, there is every evidence that cricket and marbles (though he sometimes in his narratives suppresses the fact in condescension to his Evangelical associates who believe them to be the idols of wood and stone which are spoken of in the prophets) really exercised a laudable and healthy supremacy over his mind. The animation of the scene—the gay alertness which Gray looked back on so fondly in long years of soothing and delicate musing, exerted, as the passage which we cited
30 shows, a great influence over a mind superior to Gray's in facility and freedom, though inferior in the 'little foot-steps' of the finest fancy—in the rare and carefully-hoarded felicities, which are only equalled in the immeasurable abundance of the greatest of all writers. Of course Cowper was unhappy at school as he was unhappy always ; and of

course too, we are speaking of Westminster only. For Dr. Pitman and the oculist there is nothing to say.

In scholarship Cowper seems to have succeeded. He was not, indeed, at all the sort of man to attain to that bold, strong-brained, confident scholarship which Bentley carried to such an extreme, and which, in almost every generation since, some Englishman has been found of hard head and stiff-clayed memory to keep up and perpetuate. His friend Thurlow was the man for this pursuit, and the man to prolong the just notion that those who attain early 10 proficiency in it are likely men to become Lord Chancellors. Cowper's scholarship was simply the general and delicate *impression* which the early study of the classics insensibly leaves on a nice and susceptible mind. In point of information it was strictly of a common nature. It is clear that his real knowledge was mostly confined to the poets, especially the ordinary Latin poets and Homer, and that he never bestowed any regular attention on the historians, or orators, or philosophers of antiquity, either at school or in after years. Nor indeed would such a course of study have in 20 reality been very beneficial to him. The strong analytic, comprehensive, reason-giving powers which are required in these dry and rational pursuits were utterly foreign to his mind. All that was congenial to him, he acquired in the easy intervals of apparent idleness. The friends whom he made at Westminster, and who continued for many years to be attached to him, preserved the probable tradition that he was a gentle and gradual, rather than a forcible or rigorous learner.

The last hundred years have doubtless seen a vast change 30 in the common education of the common boy. The small and pomivorous animal which we so call is now subjected to a treatment very elaborate and careful, that contrasts much with the simple alternation of classics and cuffs which was formerly so fashionable. But it may be doubted

whether for a peculiar mind such as Cowper's, on the intellectual side at least, the tolerant and corporeal theory of the last century was not preferable to the intolerant and unresting moral influence that has succeeded to it. Some minds learn most when they seem to learn least. A certain, placid, unconscious, equable in-taking of knowledge suits them, and alone suits them. To attempt to force such men to attain great learning is simply impossible. . . . The only resource is to allow them to acquire gently and casually
10 in their own way ; and in that way they will often imbibe, as if by the mere force of existence, much pleasant and well-fancied knowledge.

From Westminster Cowper went at once into a solicitor's office. Of the next few years (he was then about eighteen) we do not know much. His attention to legal pursuits was, according to his own account, not very profound ; yet it could not have been wholly contemptible, for his evangelical friend, Mr. Newton, who, whatever may be the worth of his religious theories, had certainly a sound, rough judgment
20 on topics terrestrial, used in after years to have no mean opinion of the value of his legal counsel. In truth, though nothing could be more out of Cowper's way than abstract and recondite jurisprudence, an easy and sensible mind like his would find a great deal which was very congenial to it in the well-known and perfectly settled maxims which regulate and rule the daily life of common men. No strain of capacity or stress of speculative intellect is necessary for the apprehension of these. A fair and easy mind, which is placed within their reach, will find it knows them, without
30 knowing when or how.

After some years of legal instruction, Cowper chose to be called to the bar, and took chambers in the Temple accordingly. He never, however, even pretended to practise. He passed his time in literary society, in light study, in tranquil negligence. He was intimate with Colman, Lloyd, and other

wits of those times. He wrote an essay in the *Connoisseur*, the kind of composition then most fashionable, especially with these literary gentlemen who were most careful not to be confounded with the professed authors. In a word, he did 'nothing', as that word is understood among the vigorous, aspiring, and trenchant part of mankind. Nobody could seem less likely to attain eminence. Every one must have agreed, that there was no harm in him, and few could have named any particular good which it was likely that he would achieve. In after days he drew up a memoir of his 10 life, in which he speaks of those years with deep self-reproach. It was not indeed the secular indolence of the time which excited his disapproval. The course of life had not made him more desirous of worldly honours, but less ; and nothing could be further from his tone of feeling than regret for not having strenuously striven to attain them. He spoke of those years in a Puritan manner, using words which literally express the grossest kind of active Atheism in a vague and vacant way ; leaving us to gather from 20 external sources whether they are meant to be understood in their common, plain, and human signification, or in that non-natural and technical sense in which they can scarcely have a meaning. It is evident that the regrets of Cowper had reference to offences which the healthy and sober consciences of mankind will not consider to deserve them. A vague, literary, omnitolerant idleness was perhaps their worst feature. He was himself obliged to own that he had always been considered 'as one religiously inclined, if not actually religious', and the applicable testimony, as well as the whole form and nature of his character, forbid us to 30 ascribe to him the slightest act of licence or grossness. A reverend biographer has called his life at this time, 'an unhappy compound of guilt and wretchedness.' But unless the estimable gentleman thinks it sinful to be a barrister and wretched to live in the Temple, it is not easy to make

out what he would mean. In point of intellectual cultivation, and with a view to preparing himself for writing his subsequent works, it is not possible he should have spent his time better. He then acquired that easy, familiar knowledge of terrestrial things—the vague and general information of the superficies of all existence—the acquaintance with life, business, hubbub and rustling matter of fact, which seem odd in the recluse of Olney—and enliven so effectually the cucumbers of the ‘Task’. It has been said
10 that at times every man wishes to be a man of the world, and even the most rigid critic must concede it to be nearly essential to a writer on real life and actual manners. If a man has not seen his brother, how can he describe him? As this world calls happiness and blamelessness—it is not easy to fancy a life more happy—at least with more of the common elements of happiness—or more blameless than those years of Cowper. An easy temper, light fancies, hardly as yet broken by shades of melancholy brooding; an enjoying habit, rich humour, literary, but not pedantic
20 companions; a large scene of life and observation, polished acquaintance and attached friends, are pleasing and elegant pictures. A rough hero Cowper was not and never became, but he was then, as ever, a quiet and tranquil gentleman. . . .

One not unnatural result or accompaniment of such a life was that Cowper fell in love. There were in those days, two young ladies, cousins of Cowper, residents in London, to one of whom, the Lady Hesketh of after years, he once wrote :— ‘My dear Cousin—I wonder how it happened, that much as I love you, I was never in love with you.’ No similar kind
30 providence protected his intimacy with her sister, Theodora Cowper. ‘One of the cousins with whom Thurlow used to giggle and make giggle in Southampton-row,’ was a handsome and vigorous damsel. ‘What!’ said her father, ‘What will you do if you marry William Cowper?’ meaning, in the true parental spirit, to intrude mere arithmetical

and financial ideas. 'Do, sir!' she replied, 'Wash all day, and ride out on the great dog all night!'—which is a spirited combination of domestic industry and exterior excitement. It is doubtful, however, whether either of these species of pastime and occupation would have been exactly congenial to Cowper. . . . At any rate it certainly does seem that he was not a very vigorous lover. The young lady was, as he himself oddly said :

Through tedious years of doubt and pain,
Fixed in her choice and faithful . . . *but in vain.* 10

. . . The nature of Cowper was not, indeed, passionate. He required beyond almost any man the daily society of amiable and cultivated women. It is clear that he preferred such gentle excitement to the rough and argumentative pleasures of more masculine companionship. His easy and humorous nature loved and learned from female detail. But he had no overwhelming partiality for a particular individual. One refined lady, the first moments of shyness over, was nearly as pleasing as another refined lady. Disappointments sit easy on such a mind. No doubt, too, though 20 half-unconsciously, he feared the anxious duties, perhaps even the rather contentious tenderness of matrimonial existence. At any rate, he acquiesced. Theodora never married. Love did not, however, kill her—at least, if so, it was a long time in so doing, since she survived these events more than sixty years. She never seemingly forgot the past.

But a dark cloud was at hand. . . . 'By this time,' says Cowper, 'my patrimony being nearly all spent, and there being no appearance that I should ever repair the damage by a fortune of my own getting, I began to be a 30 little apprehensive of approaching want.' However little one is fit for it, it is necessary to attack some drudgery. The vigorous and sturdy rouse themselves to the work. They find in its regular occupation, clear decisions, and stern perplexities, a bold and rude compensation for the

necessary loss or diminution of light fancies and delicate musings—

The sights which youthful poets dream,
On summer eve by haunted stream.

But it was not so with Cowper. A peculiar and slight nature unfitted him for so rough and harsh a resolution. . . .

The outward position of Cowper was, indeed, singularly fortunate. Instead of having to meet the long labours of an open profession, or the anxious decisions of a personal
10 business, he had the choice among several lucrative and quiet public offices, in which very ordinary abilities would suffice, and scarcely any degree of incapacity would entail dismissal, or reprimand, or degradation. It seemed at first scarcely possible that even the least strenuous of men should be found unequal to duties so little arduous or exciting. He has himself said—

Lucrative offices are seldom lost
For want of powers proportioned to the post ;
Give e'en a dunce the employment he desires,
20 And he soon finds the talents it requires ;
A business with an income at its heels,
Furnishes always oil for its own wheels.

The place was called the Clerkship of the Journals of the House of Lords, one of the many quiet haunts which then slumbered under the imposing shade of parliamentary and aristocratic privilege. Yet it was more than he could bear.

‘In the beginning,’ he writes, ‘a strong opposition to my friend’s right of nomination began to show itself. A powerful party was formed among the Lords to thwart
30 it, in favour of an old enemy of the family, though one much indebted to its bounty ; and it appeared plain that, if we succeeded at last, it would only be by fighting our ground by inches. Every advantage, I was told, would be sought for, and eagerly seized, to disconcert us. I was bid to expect an examination at the bar of the House, touching my sufficiency for the post I had taken. Being

necessarily ignorant of the nature of that business, it became expedient that I should visit the office daily, in order to qualify myself for the strictest scrutiny. All the horror of my fears and perplexities now returned. A thunderbolt would have been as welcome to me as this intelligence. I knew, to demonstration, that upon these terms the clerkship of the journals was no place for me. To require my attendance at the bar of the House, that I might there publicly entitle myself to the office, was, in effect, to exclude me from it. In the meantime, the interest ¹⁰ of my friend, the honour of his choice, my own reputation and circumstances, all urged me forward; all pressed me to undertake that which I saw to be impracticable. They whose spirits are formed like mine, to whom *a public exhibition of themselves, on any occasion, is mortal poison*, may have some idea of the horrors of my situation; others can have none.

‘My continual misery at length brought on a nervous fever: quiet forsook me by day, and peace by night; a finger raised against me was more than I could stand ²⁰ against. In this posture of mind, I attended regularly at the office; where, instead of a soul upon the rack, the most active spirits were essentially necessary for my purpose. I expected no assistance from anybody there, all the inferior clerks being under the influence of my opponent; and accordingly I received none. The journal books were indeed thrown open to me—a thing which could not be refused; and from which, perhaps, a man in health, and with a head turned to business, might have gained all the information he wanted; but it was not so ³⁰ with me. I read without perception, and was so distressed, that, had every clerk in the office been my friend, it could have availed me little; for I was not in a condition to receive instruction, much less to elicit it out of manuscripts, without direction. Many months went over me thus employed; constant in the use of means, despairing as to the issue.’

As the time of trial drew near his excitement rapidly increased. A short excursion into the country was attended with momentary benefit; but as soon as he returned to ⁴⁰ town he became immediately unfit for occupation, and as

unsettled as ever. He grew first to wish to become mad, next to believe that he should become so, and only to be afraid that the expected delirium might not come on soon enough to prevent his appearance for examination before the lords—a fear the bare existence of which shows how slight a barrier remained between him and the insanity which he fancied that he longed for. He then began to contemplate suicide, and not unnaturally called to mind a curious circumstance :

- 10 ' I well recollect, too,' he writes, ' that when I was about eleven years of age, my father desired me to read a vindication of self-murder, and give him my sentiments upon the question : I did so, and argued against it. My father heard my reasons, and was silent, neither approving nor disapproving ; from whence I inferred that he sided with the author against me ; though all the time, I believe, the true motive for his conduct was, that he wanted, if he could, to think favourably of the state of a departed friend, who had some years before destroyed himself, and whose death
20 had struck him with the deepest affliction. But this solution of the matter never once occurred to me, and the circumstance now weighed mightily with me.'

And he made several attempts to execute his purpose, all which are related with curious minuteness in a ' Narrative ' which he drew up after his recovery ; and of which the elaborate detail shows a strange and most painful tendency to revive the slightest circumstances of delusions which it would have been most safe and most wholesome never to recall. The curiously careful style of the narrative, as
30 elegant as that of the most flowing and felicitous letter, reminds one of nothing so much as the studiously beautiful, and compact handwriting in which Rousseau used to narrate and describe the most incoherent and indefinite of his personal delusions. On the whole, however—for a long time at least—it does not seem that the life of Cowper was in real danger. The hesitation and indeterminateness of nerve

which rendered him liable to these fancies, and unequal to ordinary action, also hindered him from carrying out these terrible visitations to their rigorous and fearful consequences. At last, however, there seems to have been possible if not actual danger. . . . [Cowper attempted to commit suicide.]

He was placed in a lunatic asylum, where he continued many months, and which he left apparently cured. After some changes of no moment, but which by his own account evinced many traces of dangerous excitement, he took up his abode at Huntingdon, with the family of Unwin ; and ¹⁰ it is remarkable how soon the taste for easy and simple, yet not wholly unintellectual society, which had formerly characterised him, revived again. The delineation cannot be given in any terms but his own :

‘ We breakfast commonly between eight and nine ; till eleven, we read either the Scripture, or the sermons of some faithful preacher of those holy mysteries ; at eleven we attend divine service, which is performed here twice every day ; and from twelve to three we separate, and amuse ourselves as we please. During that interval, I either ²⁰ read, in my own apartment, or walk, or ride, or work in the garden. We seldom sit an hour after dinner, but, if the weather permits, adjourn to the garden, where, with Mrs. Unwin and her son, I have generally the pleasure of religious conversation till tea-time. If it rains, or is too windy for walking, we either converse within doors, or sing some hymns of Martin’s collection, and by the help of Mrs. Unwin’s harpsichord, make up a tolerable concert, in which our hearts, I hope, are the best and most musical performers. After tea we sally forth to walk in good ³⁰ earnest. Mrs. Unwin is a good walker, and we have generally travelled about four miles before we see home again. When the days are short, we make this excursion in the former part of the day, between church time and dinner. At night we read, and converse, as before, till supper, and commonly finish the evening either with hymns, or a sermon, and last of all the family are called to prayers. I need not tell *you*, that such a life as this is consistent with the utmost cheerfulness ; accordingly we

are all happy, and dwell together in unity as brethren. Mrs. Unwin has almost a maternal affection for me, and I have something very like a filial one for her, and her son and I are brothers. Blessed be the God of our salvation for such companions, and for such a life, above all, for a heart to like it.'

Mr. Unwin, the husband of Mrs. Unwin, was suddenly killed soon after, and Cowper removed with Mrs. Unwin to Olney where a new epoch of his life begins.

- 10 The curate of Olney at this time was John Newton, a man of great energy of mind, and well known in his generation not only for several vigorous works, but still more for a very remarkable life. He had been captain of a Liverpool slave ship—an occupation in which he had quite energy enough to have succeeded, but had left it from serious motives, and become one of the strongest and most active of the Low Church clergymen of that day. He was in truth one of those men who seem intended to make excellence disagreeable. He was a converting engine. The whole of his own enormous
20 vigour of body—the whole steady intensity of a pushing, impelling, compelling, unoriginal mind—all the mental or corporeal exertion he could exact from the weak or elicit from the strong, were devoted to one sole purpose—the effectual impact of the Calvinistic tenets on the parishioners of Olney. Nor do we wish to hint or suggest that his exertions were futile or useless. There is no denying that there is a certain stiff, tough, agricultural, clayish English nature on which the aggressive divine produces a visible and good effect. The hardest and heaviest hammering seems required
30 to stir and warm that close and coarse matter. To impress any sense of the supernatural on so secular a substance is a great good, though that sense be expressed in false or perplexing or irritating theories. It is unpleasant, no doubt, to hear the hammering; the bystanders are in an evil case; you might as well live near an iron-ship yard. Still the blows do not hurt the iron. Something of the sort is

necessary to beat the coarse ore into a shining and useful shape. But the case is different when the hundred-handed divine desires to hit others. The very system which, on account of its hard blows, is adapted to the tough and ungentle, is by that very reason unfit for the tremulous and tender. The nature of many men and many women is such that it will not bear the daily and incessant repetition of some certain and indisputable truths. The universe has of course its dark aspect. Many tremendous facts and difficulties can be found which often haunt the timid and 10 sometimes incapacitate the feeble. To be continually insisting on these, and these only, will simply render both more and more unfit for the duties to which they were born. And if this is the case with certain fact, and clear truth, how much more with uncertain error and mystic exaggeration ! Mr. Newton was alive to this consequence of his system : ' I believe my name is up about the country for preaching people mad ; for whether it is owing to the sedentary life women lead here, &c. &c., I suppose we have near a dozen in different degrees disordered in their heads, and most of 20 them, I believe, *truly gracious people*.' He perhaps found his peculiar views more generally appreciated among this class of young ladies than among more healthy and rational people, and clearly did not wholly condemn the delivering them even at this cost from the tyranny of the ' carnal reason '.

No more dangerous adviser, if this world had been searched over, could have been found for Cowper. What the latter required was prompt encouragement to cheerful occupation, quiet amusement, gentle and unexhausting 30 society. Mr. Newton thought otherwise. His favourite motto was *Perimus in licitis*. All that easy and simple round of daily pleasures and genial employments which are the sources of instinctive happiness to the happiest natures, and most effectually cheer and vary the common life of

common men, were studiously watched and scrutinized with the energy of a Puritan and the watchfulness of an inquisitor. Mr. Newton had all the tastes and habits which go to form what in the Catholic system is called a spiritual director. . . . A natural aptitude for dictation—a steady, strong, compelling decision—great self-command, and a sharp perception of all impressible points in the characters of others—make the task of guiding ‘weaker brethren’ a natural and pleasant pursuit. To suppose a shrinking,
10 a wounded, and tremulous mind like that of Cowper’s would rise against such bold dogmatism, such hard volition, such animal nerve, is to fancy that the beaten slave will dare the lash which his very eyes instinctively fear and shun. Mr. Newton’s great idea was that Cowper ought to be of some use. There was a great deal of excellent hammering hammered in the parish, and it was sinful that a man with nothing to do should sit tranquil. Several persons in the street had done what they ought not ; football was not unknown ; cards were played ; flirtation was not conducted
20 ‘improvingly’. It was clearly Cowper’s duty to put a stop to such things. Accordingly he made him a parochial implement ; he set him to visit painful cases, to attend at prayer-meetings, to compose melancholy hymns, even to conduct or share in conducting public services himself. It never seems to have occurred to him that so fragile a mind would be unequal to the burden—that a bruised reed does often break ; or rather if it did occur to him, he regarded it as a subterranean suggestion, and expected a supernatural interference to counteract the events at which it hinted.
30 Yet there are certain rules and principles in this world which seem earthly, but which the most excellent may not on that account venture to disregard. The consequence of placing Cowper in exciting situations was a return of his excitement. It is painful to observe, that though the attack resembled in all its main features his former one, it was several months

before Mr. Newton could be brought to allow any proper physical remedies to be applied, and then it was too late. . . . Many months of dark despondency were to be passed before he returned to a simple and rational mind. . . .

The mind of Cowper was, so to speak, naturally terrestrial. If a man wishes for a nice appreciation of the details of time and sense, let him consult Cowper's miscellaneous letters. Each simple event of every day—each petty object of external observation or inward suggestion, is there chronicled with a fine and female fondness, a wise and happy ¹⁰ faculty, let us say, of deriving a gentle happiness from the tranquil and passing hour. The fortunes of the hares—Bess who died young, and Tiney who lived to be nine years old—the miller who engaged their affections at once, his powdered coat having charms that were irresistible—the knitting-needles of Mrs. Unwin—the qualities of his friend Hill who managed his money transactions—

An honest man, close buttoned to the chin,
Broadcloth without, and a warm heart within—

live in his pages, and were the natural, insensible, unbiassed ²⁰ occupants of his fancy. It is easy for a firm and hard mind to despise the minutiae of life, and to pore and brood over an abstract proposition. It may be possible for the highest, the strongest, the most arduous imagination to live aloof from common things—alone with the unseen world, as some lived their whole lives in memory with a world which has passed away. But it seems hardly possible that an imagination such as Cowper's, which was rather a detective fancy, perceiving the charm and essence of things which are seen, than an eager, actuating, conceptive power embodying, ³⁰ enlivening, empowering those which are not seen, should leave its own home—the *domus et tellus*—the sweet fields and rare orchards which it loved—and go out alone apart from all flesh into the trackless and fearful and unknown

Infinite. Of course, his timid mind shrank from it at once, and returned to its own fireside. After a little, the idea that he had a true faith faded away. Mr. Newton, with mis-directed zeal, sought to revive it by inciting him to devotional composition ; but the only result was the volume of 'Olney Hymns'—a very painful record, of which the burden is

10 My former hopes are fled,
 My terror now begins ;
 I feel, alas ! that I am dead
 In trespasses and sins.

 Ah, whither shall I fly ?
 I hear the thunder roar ;
 The law proclaims destruction nigh,
 And vengeance at the door.

'The Preacher' himself did not conceive such a store of melancholy forebodings. . . .

The peculiarity of Cowper's life is its division into marked periods. From his birth to his first illness he may be said to
 20 have lived in one world, and for some twenty years afterwards, from his thirty-second to about his fiftieth year, in a wholly distinct one, and much of that time was spent in hopeless despondency. His principal companions during that time were Mr. Newton, . . . and Mrs. Unwin, who may be said to have broken the charmed circle of seclusion in which they lived by inciting Cowper to continuous literary composition. Of Mrs. Unwin herself ample memorials remain. She was, in truth, a most excellent person—in mind and years much older than the poet—as it were by profession
 30 elderly, able in every species of preserve, profound in salts, and pans, and jellies ; culinary by taste ; by tact and instinct motherly and housewifish. She was not, however, without some less larderiferous qualities. Lady Hesketh and Lady Austen, neither of them very favourably-pre-

judiced critics, decided so. The former has written, 'She is very far from grave; on the contrary, she is cheerful and gay, and laughs *de bon cœur* upon the smallest provocation. Amidst all the little puritanical words which fall from her *de tems en tems*, she seems to have by nature a great fund of gaiety. . . . I must say, too, that she seems to be very well read in the English poets, as appears by several little quotations which she makes from time to time, and has a true taste for what is excellent in that way.' This she showed by persuading Cowper to the composition of his first 10 volume.

As a poet, Cowper belongs, though with some differences, to the school of Pope. Great question, as is well known, has been raised whether that very accomplished writer was a poet at all; and a secondary and equally debated question runs side by side, whether, if a poet, he were a great one. With the peculiar genius and personal rank of Pope we have in this article nothing to do. But this much may be safely said, that according to the definition which has been ventured of the poetical art, by the greatest and most accomplished 20 of the other school, his works are delicately-finished specimens of artistic excellence in one branch of it. 'Poetry', says Shelley, who was surely a good judge, 'is the expression of the imagination', by which he meant of course not only the expression of the interior sensations accompanying the faculty's employment, but likewise, and more emphatically, the exercise of it in the delineation of objects which attract it. Now society, viewed as a whole, is clearly one of those objects. There is a vast assemblage of human beings, of all nations, tongues, and languages, each with ideas and a 30 personality and a cleaving mark of its own, yet each having somewhat that resembles something of all, much that resembles a part of many—a motley regiment, of various forms, of a million impulses, passions, thoughts, fancies, motives, actions; a 'many-headed monster thing'; a Bashi

Bazouk array ; a clown to be laughed at ; a hydra to be spoken evil of ; yet, in fine, our all—the very people of the whole earth. There is nothing in nature more attractive to the fancy than this great spectacle and congregation. Since Herodotus went to and fro to the best of his ability over all the earth, the spectacle of civilisation has ever drawn to itself the quick eyes and quick tongues of seeing and roving men. Not only, says Goethe, is man ever interesting to man, but ‘properly there is nothing else
10 interesting’. There is a distinct subject for poetry—at least according to Shelley’s definition—in selecting and working out, in idealising, in combining, in purifying, in intensifying the great features and peculiarities which make society, as a whole, interesting, remarkable, fancy-taking. . . . There are certain principles, causes, passions, affections, acting on and influencing communities at large, permeating their life, ruling their principles, directing their history, working as a subtle and wandering principle over all their existence. These have a somewhat abstract character, as compared
20 with the soft ideals and passionate incarnations of purely individual character, and seem dull beside the stirring lays of eventful times, in which the earlier and bolder poets delight. The tendency of civilisation is to pare away the oddness and licence of personal character, and to leave a monotonous agreeableness as the sole trait and comfort of mankind. And this very effect obviously tends to increase the efficacy of general principles, to bring to view the daily efficacy of constant causes, to suggest the hidden agency of subtle abstractions. Accordingly as civilisation
30 augments and philosophy grows, we commonly find a school of ‘common-sense poets’, as they may be called, arise and develop, who proceed to describe what they see around them, to describe its *natura naturans*, to delineate its *natura naturata*, to evolve its productive agencies, to pursue their subtle ramifications. Complete, as the most characteristic

specimen of this class of poets, stands Pope. He was the sort of person we cannot even conceive existing in a barbarous age. His subject was not life at large, but fashionable life. He described the society in which he was thrown—the people among whom he lived. His mind was a hoard of small maxims, a quintessence of petty observations. When he described character, he described it not dramatically, nor as it is in itself ; but observantly and from without, calling up in the mind not so much a vivid conception of the man, of the real, corporeal, outward, substantial being, as an idea 10 of the idea which a metaphysical bystander in an elaborate moment might refine and excruciate concerning him. Society in Pope is scarcely a society of people, but of pretty little atoms, coloured and painted with hoops or in coats—a miniature of metaphysics, a puppet-show of sylphs. Yet exactly on this account it the more elucidates the doctrine, that the tendency of civilised poetry is towards an analytic sketch of the existing civilisation. Nor is the effect diminished by the pervading character of keen judgment and minute intrusive sagacity ; for no great painter of English 20 life can be without a rough sizing of strong sense ; or he would fail from want of sympathy with his subject. In short, Pope does but the more represent the class and type of ‘common-sense’ poets who substitute an animated *catalogue raisonné* of working thoughts and operative principles—a sketch of the then present society, as a whole and as an object, for the κλέα ἀνδρῶν, the tale of which is one subject of early verse, and the stage effect of living, loving, passionate, impetuous men and women, which are special topics of another. 30

What Pope is to our fashionable and town life, Cowper is to our domestic and rural life. This is perhaps the reason why he is so national. It has been said no foreigner can live in the country. We doubt whether any people, who left their whole heart, and entire exclusive breath of their

existence to be concentrated in a great capital, could or would appreciate such intensely provincial pictures as are the entire scope of Cowper's delineation. A good many imaginative persons are really plagued with him. Everything is so comfortable; the tea-urn hisses so plainly, the toast is so warm, the breakfast so neat, the food so edible, that one turns away, in excitable moments, a little angrily from anything so quiet, tame, and sober. Have we not always hated this life? . . . Aspiring and excitable youth stoutly maintains
 10 it can endure anything much better than the 'gross fog Bæotian'—the torpid, in-door, tea-tabular felicity. Still a great deal of tea is really consumed in the English nation. A settled and practical people are distinctly in favour of heavy relaxations, placid prolixities, slow comforts. A state between the mind and the body, something intermediate, half-way from the newspaper to a nap—this is what we may call the middle-life theory of the influential English gentleman—the true aspiration of the ruler of the world.

'Tis then the understanding takes repose
 20 In indolent vacuity of thought,
 And sleeps and is refreshed. Meanwhile the face
 Conceals the mood lethargic with a mask
 Of deep deliberation.

It is these in-door scenes, this common world, this gentle round of 'calm delights', the trivial course of slowly-moving pleasures, the petty detail of quiet relaxation, that Cowper excels in. The post-boy, the winter's evening, the newspaper, the knitting needles, the stockings, the waggon—these are his subjects. His sure popularity arises from his
 30 having held up to the English people exact delineations of what they really prefer. Perhaps one person in four hundred understands Wordsworth, about one in eight thousand may appreciate Shelley, but there is no expressing the small fraction who do not love dulness, who do not enter into

Homeborn happiness,
Fireside enjoyments, intimate delights,
And all the comforts that the lowly roof
Of undisturbed retirement, and the hours
Of long uninterrupted evening know.

His objection to the more exciting and fashionable pleasures was perhaps, in an extreme analysis, that they put him out. They were too great a task for his energies—asked too much for his spirits. His comments on them rather remind us of Mr. Rushworth—Miss Austen's heavy hero's remark on the theatre, 'I think we went on much better by ourselves before this was thought of, doing, doing, doing *nothing*'.

The subject of these pictures, in point of interest, may be what we choose to think it, but there is no denying great merit to the execution. The sketches have the highest merit—suitableness of style. It would be absurd to describe a postboy as sonneteers their mistress—to cover his plain face with fine similes—to put forward the 'brow of Egypt'—to stick metaphors upon him, as the Americans upon General Washington. The only merit such topics have room for is an easy and dextrous plainness—a sober suit of well-fitting expressions—a free, working, flowing, picturesque garb of words adapted to the solid conduct of a sound and serious world, and this merit Cowper's style has. On the other hand, it entirely wants the higher and rarer excellences of poetical expression. There is none of the choice art which has studiously selected the words of one class of great poets, or the rare, untaught, unteachable felicity which has vivified those of others. No one, in reading Cowper, stops as if to draw his breath more deeply over words which do not so much express or clothe poetical ideas, as seem to intertwine, coalesce, and be blended with the very essence of poetry itself.

Of course a poet could not deal in any measure with such

subjects as Cowper dealt with, and not become inevitably, to a certain extent, satirical. The ludicrous is in some sort the imagination of common life. The 'dreary intercourse' of which Wordsworth makes mention, would be dreary, unless some people possessed more than he did the faculty of making fun. A universe in which Dignity No. I. conversed decorously with Dignity No. II. on topics befitting their state, would be perhaps a levee of great intellects and a tea-table of enormous thoughts; but it would want the best
10 charm of this earth—the medley of great things and little, of things mundane and things celestial, things low and things awful, of things eternal and things of half a minute. It is in this contrast that humour and satire have their place—pointing out the intense unspeakable incongruity of the groups and juxtapositions of our world. To all of these which fell under his own eye, Cowper was alive. A gentle sense of propriety and consistency in daily things was evidently characteristic of him; and if he fail of the highest
20 success in this species of art, it is not from an imperfect treatment of the scenes and conceptions which he touched, but from the fact that the follies with which he deals are not the greatest follies—that there are deeper absurdities in human life than John Gilpin touches upon—that the superficial occurrences of ludicrous life do not exhaust or even deeply test the mirthful resources of our minds and fortunes.

As a scold, we think Cowper failed. He had a great idea of the use of railing, and there are many pages of laudable invective against various vices which we feel no call what-
30 ever to defend. But a great vituperator had need to be a great hater; and of any real rage, any such gall and bitterness as great and irritable satirists have in other ages let loose upon men, of any thorough, brooding, burning, abiding detestation, he was as incapable as a tame hare. . . . Nor has his language any of the sharp intrusive acumen

which divides in sunder both soul and spirit, that is necessary for fierce and unforgettable reviling.

Some people may be surprised, notwithstanding our lengthy explanation, at hearing Cowper treated as of the school of Pope. It has been customary, at least with some critics, to speak of him as one of those who recoiled from the artificiality of that great writer, and at least commenced a return to a simple delineation of outward nature. And of course there is considerable truth in this idea. The poetry (if such it is) of Pope would be just as true if all the trees 10 were yellow and all the grass fish-colour. He did not care for 'snowy scalps', or 'rolling streams,' or 'icy halls,' or 'precipice's gloom.' Nor for that matter did Cowper either. He, as Hazlitt most justly said, was as much afraid of a shower of rain as any man that ever lived. At the same time, the fashionable life described by Pope has no reference whatever to the beauties of the material universe. . . . But the rural life of Cowper's poetry has a constant and necessary reference to the country, is identified with its features, cannot be separated from it even in fancy. Green fields and 20 a slow river seem all the material of beauty Cowper had given him. But what is more to the purpose, his attention was well concentrated upon them. As he himself said, he did not go more than thirteen miles from home for twenty years, and very seldom as far. He was, therefore, well able to find out all that was charming in Olney and its neighbourhood, and as it presented nothing which is not to be found in any of the fresh country parts of England, what he has left us is really a delicate description and appreciative delineation of the simple essential English country. 30

However, it is to be remarked that the description of nature in Cowper differs altogether from the peculiar delineation of the same subject, which has been so influential in more recent times, and which bears, after its greatest master, the name Wordsworthian. To Cowper

nature is simply a background, a beautiful background no doubt, but still essentially a *locus in quo*—a space in which the work and mirth of life pass and are performed. A more professed delineation does not occur than the following :

Oh Winter ! ruler of the inverted year,
 Thy scattered hair with sleet-like ashes filled,
 Thy breath congealed upon thy lips, thy cheeks
 Fringed with a beard made white with other snows
 Than those of age, thy forehead wrapped in clouds,
 10 A leafless branch thy sceptre, and thy throne
 A sliding car, indebted to no wheels,
 But urged by storms along its slippery way ;
 I love thee, all unlovely as thou seemest,
 And dreaded as thou art. Thou hold'st the sun
 A prisoner in the yet undawning east,
 Shortening his journey between morn and noon,
 And hurrying him, impatient of his stay,
 Down to the rosy west ; but kindly still
 Compensating his loss with added hours
 20 Of social converse and instructive ease,
 And gathering, at short notice, in one group
 The family dispersed, and fixing thought,
 Not less dispersed by daylight and its cares.
 I crown thee King of intimate delights,
 Fireside enjoyments, homeborn happiness,
 And all the comforts that the lowly roof
 Of undisturbed retirement, and the hours
 Of long uninterrupted evening know.
 No rattling wheels stop short before these gates.

30 After a very few lines he returns within doors to the occupation of man and woman—to human tasks and human pastimes. To Wordsworth, on the contrary, nature is a religion. So far from being unwilling to treat her as a special object of study, he hardly thought any other equal or comparable. He was so far from holding the doctrine that the earth was made for men to live in, that it would rather seem as if he thought men were created to see the earth. The whole aspect of nature was to him a special revelation of an immanent and abiding power—a breath of the pervading

art—a smile of the Eternal Mind—according to the lines which every one knows—

A sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused ;
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean, and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man :
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things.

10

Of this haunting, supernatural, mystical view of nature Cowper never heard. Like the strong old lady who said, '*She* was born before nerves were invented,' he may be said to have lived before the awakening of the detective sensibility which reveals this deep and obscure doctrine.

In another point of view, also, Cowper is curiously contrasted with Wordsworth, as a delineator of nature. The delineation of Cowper is a simple delineation. He makes a sketch of the object before him, and there he leaves it. Wordsworth, on the contrary, is not satisfied unless he describe not only the bare inanimate outward object which others see, but likewise the reflected high-wrought feelings which that object excites in a brooding self-conscious mind. His subject was not so much nature, as nature reflected by Wordsworth. Years of deep musing and long introspection had made him familiar with every shade and shadow in the many-coloured impression which the universe makes on meditative genius and observant sensibility. Now these feelings Cowper did not describe, because, to all appearance, he did not perceive them. He had a great pleasure in watching the common changes and common aspects of outward things, but he was not invincibly prone to brood and pore over their reflex effects upon his own mind.

A primrose by the river's brim,
A yellow primrose was to him,
And it was nothing more.

According to the account which Cowper at first gave of his literary occupations, his entire design was to communicate the religious views to which he was then a convert. He fancied that the vehicle of verse might bring many to listen to truths which they would be disinclined to have stated to them in simple prose. And however tedious the recurrence of these theological tenets may be to the common reader, it is certain that a considerable portion of Cowper's peculiar popularity may be traced to their expression. He is the
10 one poet of a class which have no poets. In that once large and still considerable portion of the English world, which regards the exercise of the fancy and the imagination as dangerous—snares, as they speak—distracting the soul from an intense consideration of abstract doctrine, Cowper's strenuous inculcation of those doctrines has obtained for him a certain toleration. Of course all verse is perilous. The use of single words is harmless, but the employment of two, in such a manner as to form a rhyme—the regularities of interval and studied recurrence of the same sound, evince
20 an attention to time, and a partiality to things of sense. Most poets must be prohibited; the exercise of the fancy requires watching. But Cowper is a ticket-of-leave man. He has the chaplain's certificate. He has expressed himself 'with the utmost propriety'. The other imaginative criminals must be left to the fates, but he may be admitted to the sacred drawing-room, though with constant care and scrupulous *surveillance*. Perhaps, however, taken in connection with his diseased and peculiar melancholy, these tenets really add to the artistic effect of Cowper's writings.
30 The free discussion of daily matters, the delicate delineation of domestic detail, the passing narrative of fugitive occurrences, would seem light and transitory, if it were not broken by the interruption of a terrible earnestness, and relieved by the dark background of deep and foreboding sadness. It is scarcely artistic to describe 'the painted veil

which those who live call life', and leave wholly out of view and undescribed 'the chasm sightless and drear', which lies always beneath and around it.

It is of the 'Task' more than of Cowper's earlier volume of poems that a critic of his poetry must more peculiarly be understood to speak. All the best qualities of his genius are there concentrated, and the alloy is less than elsewhere. He was fond of citing the saying of Dryden, that the rhyme had often helped him to a thought—a great but very perilous truth. The difficulty is, that the rhyme so frequently helps 10 to the wrong thought—that the stress of the mind is recalled from the main thread of the poem, from the narrative, or sentiment, or delineation, to some wayside remark or fancy, which the casual resemblances of final sound suggest. This is fatal, unless either a poet's imagination be so hot and determined as to bear down upon its objects, and to be unwilling to hear the voice of any charmer who might distract it, or else the nature of the poem itself should be of so desultory a character that it does not much matter about the sequence of the thought—at least within great and 20 ample limits, as in some of Swift's casual rhymes, where the sound itself does seem really and truly the connecting link of unity. Now Cowper is not often in either of these positions; he always has a thread of argument on which he is hanging his illustrations, and yet he has not the exclusive interest or the undeviating energetic downrightness of mind which would ensure his going through it without idling or turning aside; consequently the thoughts which the rhyme suggests are constantly breaking in upon the main matter, destroying the emphatic unity which is essential 30 to rhythmical delineation. His blank verse of course is exempt from this defect, and there is moreover something in the nature of the metre which fits it for the expression of studious and quiet reflection. The 'Task' was, in fact, composed at the healthiest period of Cowper's later life, in

the full vigour of his faculties, and the additional spur that he was well aware the semi-recognition of his first volume had made it a common subject of literary discussion, whether he was a poet or not. Many men could endure—as indeed all but about ten do actually in every generation endure—to be without this distinction, but few could have an idea that it was a frequent point of argument whether they were duly entitled or not, without at least a strong desire to settle the question by some work of decisive
10 excellence. This the ‘Task’ achieved for Cowper. Since its publication his name has been a household word—a particularly household word in English literature. The story of its composition is connected with one of the most curious incidents in Cowper’s later life, and has given occasion to a good deal of writing.

In the summer of 1781, it happened that two ladies called at a shop exactly opposite the house at Olney where Cowper and Mrs. Unwin resided. One of these was a familiar and perhaps tame object—a Mrs. Jones—the wife of a neigh-
20 bouring parson ; the other, however, was so striking, that Cowper, one of the shyest and least demonstrative of men, immediately asked Mrs. Unwin to invite her to tea. This was a great event, as it would appear that few or no social interruptions, casual or contemplated, then varied what Cowper called the ‘duality of his existence.’ This favoured individual was Lady Austen, a person of what Mr. Hayley terms ‘colloquial talents’ ; in truth an energetic, vivacious, amusing, and rather handsome lady of the world. She had been much in France, and is said to have caught the facility
30 of manner and love of easy society, which is the unchanging characteristic of that land of change. She was a fascinating person in the great world, and it is not difficult to imagine she must have been an excitement indeed at Olney. She was, however, most gracious ; fell in love, as Cowper says, not only with him but with Mrs. Unwin ; was called ‘Sister

Ann', laughed and made laugh, was altogether so great an acquisition that his seeing her seemed in his view to show 'strong marks of providential interposition'. He thought her superior to the curate's wife, who was a 'valuable person', but had a family, &c. &c. The new acquaintance had much to contribute to the Olney conversation. She had seen much of the world, and probably seen it well, and had at least a good deal to narrate concerning it. Among other interesting matters she one day recounted to Cowper the story of John Gilpin, as one which she had heard in 10 childhood, and in a short time the poet sent her the ballad, which every one has liked ever since. It was written, he says, no doubt truly, in order to relieve a fit of terrible and uncommon despondency; but altogether, for a few months after the introduction of this new companion, he was more happy and animated than at any other time after his first illness. Clouds, however, began to show themselves soon. The circumstances are of the minute and female kind, which it would require a good deal of writing to describe, even if we knew them perfectly. The original cause of misconstruction 20 was a rather romantic letter of Lady Austen, drawing a sublime picture of what she expected from Cowper's friendship. Mr. Scott, the clergyman at Olney, who had taken the place of Mr. Newton, and who is described as a dry and sensible man, gave a short account of what he thought was the real embroilment. 'Who,' said he, 'can be surprised that two women should be daily in the society of one man and then quarrel with *one another*?'

'From a scene of the most uninterrupted retirement,' he says to Mr. Unwin, 'we have passed at once into a state 30 of constant engagement. Not that our society is much multiplied; the addition of an individual has made all this difference. Lady Austen and we pass our days alternately at each other's *château*. In the morning I walk with one or other of the ladies, and in the afternoon wind thread. Thus did Hercules, and thus probably did Samson, and

thus do I ; and were both those heroes living, I should not fear to challenge them to a trial of skill in that business, or doubt to beat them both. As to killing lions and other amusements of that kind, with which they were so delighted, I should be their humble servant and beg to be excused.' -

Things were in this state when she suggested to him the composition of a new poem of some length in blank verse, and on being asked to suggest a subject, said, Well, write upon that 'sofa', whence is the title of the first book of the
10 'Task'. According to Cowper's own account, it was this poem which was the cause of the ensuing dissension.

'On her first settlement in our neighbourhood, I made it my own particular business (for at that time I was not employed in writing, having published my first volume, and not begun my second) to pay my devoirs to her ladyship every morning at eleven. Customs very soon become laws. I began the 'Task'; for she was the lady who gave me the Sofa for a subject. Being once engaged in the work, I began to feel the inconvenience of my morning atten-
20 dance. We had seldom breakfasted ourselves till ten; and the intervening hour was all the time that I could find in the whole day for writing; and occasionally it would happen that the half of that hour was all that I could secure for the purpose. But there was no remedy. Long usage had made that which at first was optional, a point of good manners, and consequently of necessity, and I was forced to neglect the 'Task', to attend upon the Muse who had inspired the subject. But she had ill health, and before I had quite finished the work was
30 obliged to repair to Bristol.'

And it is possible that this is the true account of the matter. Yet we fancy there is a kind of awkwardness and constraint in the manner in which it is spoken of. Of course, the plain and literal portion of mankind have set it down at once that Cowper was in love with Lady Austen, just as they married him over and over again to Mrs. Unwin. But of a strong passionate love, as we have before explained, we do not think Cowper capable, and there are certainly no signs

of it in this case. There is, however, one odd circumstance. Years after, when no longer capable of original composition, he was fond of hearing all his poems read to him except ' John Gilpin '. There were recollections, he said, connected with those verses which were too painful. Did he mean, the worm that dieth not—the reminiscence of the animated narratress of that not intrinsically melancholy legend ?

The literary success of Cowper opened to him a far larger circle of acquaintance, and connected him in close bonds with many of his relations, who had looked with an unfavour- 10
able eye at the peculiar tenets which he had adopted, and the peculiar and recluse life which he had been advised to lead. It is to these friends and acquaintance that we owe that copious correspondence on which so much of Cowper's fame at present rests. The complete letter-writer is now an unknown animal. In the last century, when communications were difficult and epistles rare, there were a great many valuable people who devoted a good deal of time to writing elaborate letters. You wrote letters to a man whom you knew nineteen years and a half ago, and told him what you 20
had for dinner, and what your second cousin said, and how the crops got on. Every detail of life was described, and dwelt on, and improved. The art of writing, at least of writing easily, was comparatively rare, which kept the number of such compositions within narrow limits. Sir Walter Scott says he knew a man who remembered that the London post-bag once came to Edinburgh with only one letter in it. One can fancy the solemn conscientious elaborateness with which a person would write, with the notion that his letter would have a whole coach and a whole bag 30
to itself, and travel two hundred miles alone, the exclusive object of a red guard's care. The only thing like it now—the deferential minuteness with which one public office writes to another, conscious that the letter will travel on her Majesty's service three doors down the passage—sinks by comparison

into cursory brevity. No administrative reform will be able to bring even the official mind of these days into the grave inch-an-hour conscientiousness with which a confidential correspondent of a century ago related the growth of apples, the manufacture of jams, the appearance of flirtations, and other such like things. All the ordinary incidents of an easy life were made the most of ; a party was epistolary capital, a race a mine of wealth. So deeply sentimental was this intercourse, that it was much argued whether the affections
10 were created for the sake of ink, or ink for the sake of the affections. Thus it continued for many years, and the fruits thereof are written in the volumes of family papers which daily appear, are praised as materials for an historian at present in a crib, and consigned, as the case may be, to posterity or oblivion. All this has now passed away. Sir Rowland Hill is entitled to the credit, not only of introducing stamps, but also of destroying letters. The amount of annotations which will be required to make the notes of this
20 day intelligible to posterity is a wonderful idea, and no quantity of comment will make them readable. You might as well publish a collection of telegraphs. The careful detail, the studious minuteness, the circumstantial statement of a former time, is exchanged for a curt brevity or only half-intelligible narration. In old times, letters were written for people who knew nothing and required to be told everything. Now they are written for people who know everything except the one thing which the letter is designed to explain to them. It is impossible in some respects not to regret the old practice. It is well that each
30 age should write for itself a faithful account of its habitual existence. We do this to a certain extent in novels, but novels are difficult materials for an historian. They raise a cause and a controversy as to how far they are really faithful delineations. . . . Letters are generally true on these points. The least veracious man will tell truly the colour

of his coat, the hour of his dinner, the materials of his shoes. The unconscious delineation of a recurring and familiar life is beyond the reach of a fraudulent fancy. Horace Walpole was not a very scrupulous narrator; yet it was too much trouble even for him to tell lies on many points. His set stories and conspicuous scandals are no doubt often unfounded, but there is a gentle undercurrent of daily unremarkable life and manners which he evidently assumed as a datum for his historical imagination. Whence posterity will derive this for the times of Queen Victoria it is difficult 10 to fancy. Even memoirs are no resource; they generally leave out the common life, and try at least to bring out the uncommon events.

It is evident that this species of composition exactly harmonized with the temperament and genius of Cowper. Detail was his forte and quietness his element. Accordingly, his delicate humour plays over perhaps a million letters, mostly descriptive of events which no one else would have thought worth narrating, and yet which, when narrated, show to us, and will show to persons to whom it will be yet 20 more strange, the familiar, placid, easy, ruminating, provincial existence of our great-grandfathers. Slow, Olney might be,—indescribable, it certainly was not. We seem to have lived there ourselves.

The most copious subject of Cowper's correspondence is his translation of Homer. This was published by subscription, and it is pleasant to observe the healthy facility with which one of the shyest men in the world set himself to extract guineas from every one he had ever heard of. In several cases he was very successful. The University of 30 Oxford, he tells us, declined, as of course it would, to recognise the principle of subscribing towards literary publications; but other public bodies and many private persons were more generous. It is to be wished that their aid had contributed to the production of a more pleasing work.

The fact is, Cowper was not like Agamemnon. The most conspicuous feature in the Greek heroes is a certain brisk, decisive activity, which always strikes and always likes to strike. This quality is faithfully represented in the poet himself. Homer is the briskest of men. The Germans have denied that there was any such person; but they have never questioned his extreme activity. 'From what you tell me, sir,' said an American, 'I should like to have read Homer. I should say he was a go-ahead party.' Now this
 10 is exactly what Cowper was not. His genius was domestic, and tranquil, and calm. He had no sympathy, or little sympathy, even with the common, half-asleep activities of a refined society; an evening party was too much for him; a day's hunt a preposterous excitement. It is absurd to expect a man like this to sympathise with the stern stimulants of a barbaric age, with a race who fought because they liked it, and a poet who sang of fighting because he thought their taste judicious. As if to make
 20 matters worse, Cowper selected a metre in which it would be scarcely possible for any one, however gifted, to translate Homer. The two kinds of metrical composition most essentially opposed to one another are ballad poetry and blank verse. The very nature of the former requires a marked pause and striking rhythm. Every line should have a distinct end and a clear beginning. It is like martial music, there should be a tramp in the very versification of it:

30 Armour rusting in his halls
 On the blood of Clifford calls;
 'Quell the Scot,' exclaims the lance,
 Bear me to the heart of France,
 Is the longing of the shield:
 Tell thy name, thou trembling field,
 Field of death, where'er thou be,
 Groan thou with our victory.

And this is the tone of Homer. The grandest of human

tongues marches forward with its proudest steps: the clearest tones call forward—the most marked of metres carries him on :

Like a reappearing star,
Like a glory from afar—

he ever heads, and will head, 'the flock of war'. Now blank verse is the exact opposite of all this. Dr. Johnson laid down that it was verse only to the eye, which was a bold dictum. But without going this length it will be safe to say, that of all considerable metres in our language 10 it has the least distinct conclusion, least decisive repetition, the least trumpet-like rhythm; and it is this of which Cowper made choice. He had an idea that extreme literalness was an unequalled advantage, and logically reasoned that it was easier to do this in that metre than in any other. He did not quite hold with Mr. Cobbett that the 'gewgaw fetters of rhyme were invented by the monks to enslave the people'; but as a man who had due experience of both, he was aware that it is easier to write two lines of different endings than two lines of the same ending, and 20 supposed that by taking advantage of this to preserve the exact grammatical meaning of his author, he was indisputably approximating to a good translation. 'Whether,' he writes, 'a translation of Homer may be best executed in blank verse or in rhyme is a question in the decision of which no man finds difficulty who has ever duly considered what translation ought to be, or who is in any degree practically acquainted with those kinds of versification. . . . No human ingenuity can be equal to the task of closing every couplet with sounds homotonous, expressing at the 30 same time the full sense, and only the full sense, of the original.' And if the true object of translation were to save the labour and dictionaries of construing schoolboys, there is no question but this slavish adherence to the original

would be the most likely to gain the approbation of those diminutive but sure judges. But if the object is to convey an idea of the general tone, scope, and artistic effect of the original, the mechanical copying of the details is as likely to end in a good result as a careful cast from a dead man's features to produce a living and speaking being. On the whole, therefore, the condemnation remains, that Homer is not dull, and Cowper is.

With the translation of Homer terminated all the
10 brightest period of Cowper's life. There is little else to say. He undertook an edition of Milton—a most difficult task, involving the greatest and most accurate learning, in theology, in classics, in Italian—in a word, in all ante-Miltonic literature. By far the greater portion of this lay quite out of Cowper's path. He had never been a hard student, and his evident incapacity for the task troubled and vexed him. A man who had never been able to take any real responsibility was not likely to feel comfortable under the weight of a task which very few men indeed
20 would be able to accomplish. Mrs. Unwin too fell into a state of helplessness and despondency; and instead of relying on her for cheerfulness and management, he was obliged to manage for her, and cheer her. His mind was unequal to the task. Gradually the dark cloud of melancholy, which had hung about him so long, grew and grew, and extended itself day by day. In vain Lord Thurlow, who was a likely man to know, assured him that his spiritual despondency was without ground; he smiled sadly, but seemed to think that at any rate he was not
30 going into Chancery. In vain Hayley, a rival poet, but a good-natured, blundering, well-intentioned, incoherent man, went to and fro, getting the Lord Chief Justice and other dignitaries to attest, under their hands, that they concurred in Thurlow's opinion. In vain, with far wiser kindness, his relatives, especially many of his mother's

family, from whom he had been long divided, but who gradually drew nearer to him as they were wanted, endeavoured to divert his mind to healthful labour and tranquil society. The day of these things had passed away—the summer was ended. He became quite unequal to original composition, and his greatest pleasure was hearing his own writings read to him. After a long period of hopeless despondency he died on the 25th of April, in the first year of this century; and if he needs an epitaph, let us say, that not in vain was he Nature's favourite. As 10 a higher poet sings :

And all day long I number yet,
All seasons through, another debt,
Which I, wherever thou art met,
To thee am owing ;
An instinct call it, a blind sense,
A happy, genial influence,
Coming one knows not how nor whence,
Nor whither going.

.

If stately passions in me burn,
And one chance look to thee should turn,
I drink out of an humbler urn,
A lowlier pleasure ;
The homely sympathy that heeds
The common life our nature breeds ;
A wisdom fitted to the needs
Of hearts at leisure.

HYMN

LIGHT SHINING OUT OF DARKNESS

Written in 1773.—Published 1779

GOD moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform ;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm.

Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never failing skill ;
He treasures up his bright designs,
And works his sovereign will.

8

Ye fearful saints fresh courage take,
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head.

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust him for his grace ;
Behind a frowning providence,
He hides a smiling face.

16

His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding ev'ry hour ;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flow'r.

Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan his work in vain ;
God is his own interpreter,
And he will make it plain.

24

Selections from
C O W P E R ' S
P O E T R Y a n d P R O S E

From RETIREMENT

Written Aug. to Oct. 1781.—Published 1782

YE groves (the statesman at his desk exclaims,
 Sick of a thousand disappointed aims,)
 My patrimonial treasure and my pride,
 Beneath your shades your grey possessor hide,
 Receive me languishing for that repose
 The servant of the public never knows. 370
 Ye saw me once (ah, those regretted days
 When boyish innocence was all my praise !)
 Hour after hour delightfully allot
 To studies then familiar, since forgot,
 And cultivate a taste for ancient song,
 Catching its ardour as I mus'd along ;
 Nor seldom, as propitious heav'n might send,
 What once I valued and could boast, a friend,
 Were witnesses how cordially I press'd
 His undissembling virtue to my breast ; 380
 Receive me now, not uncorrupt as then,
 Nor guiltless of corrupting other men,
 But vers'd in arts that, while they seem to stay
 A falling empire, hasten its decay.
 To the fair haven of my native home,
 The wreck of what I was, fatigu'd, I come ;
 For once I can approve the patriot's voice,
 And make the course he recommends my choice ;
 We meet at last in one sincere desire,
 His wish and mine both prompt me to retire. 390
 'Tis done—he steps into the welcome chaise,
 Lolls at his ease behind four handsome bays,
 That whirl away from business and debate
 The disincumber'd Atlas of the state.
 Ask not the boy, who when the breeze of morn
 First shakes the glitt'ring drops from every thorn

Unfolds his flock, then under bank or bush
 Sits linking cherry stones, or platting rush,
 How fair is freedom ?—he was always free :
 To carve his rustic name upon a tree, 400
 To snare the mole, or with ill-fashion'd hook,
 To draw th' incautious minnow from the brook,
 Are life's prime pleasures in his simple view,
 His flock the chief concern he ever knew—
 She shines but little in his heedless eyes,
 The good we never miss we rarely prize :
 But ask the noble drudge in state affairs,
 Escap'd from office and its constant cares,
 What charms he sees in freedom's smile express'd,
 In freedom lost so long, now repossess'd ; 410
 The tongue whose strains were cogent as commands,
 Rever'd at home, and felt in foreign lands,
 Shall own itself a stamm'rer in that cause,
 Or plead its silence as its best applause.
 He knows indeed that, whether dress'd or rude,
 Wild without art, or artfully subdu'd,
 Nature in ev'ry form inspires delight,
 But never mark'd her with so just a sight.
 Her hedge-row shrubs, a variegated store,
 With woodbine and wild roses mantled o'er, 420
 Green balks and furrow'd lands, the stream that spreads
 Its cooling vapour o'er the dewy meads,
 Downs that almost escape th' inquiring eye,
 That melt and fade into the distant sky,
 Beauties he lately slighted as he pass'd,
 Seem all created since he travell'd last.
 Master of all th' enjoyments he design'd,
 No rough annoyance rankling in his mind,
 What early philosophic hours he keeps,
 How regular his meals, how sound he sleeps ! 430
 Not sounder he that on the mainmast head,
 While morning kindles with a windy red,

Begins a long look-out for distant land,
 Nor quits, till ev'ning watch, his giddy stand,
 Then swift descending with a seaman's haste,
 Slips to his hammock, and forgets the blast.
 He chooses company, but not the squire's,
 Whose wit is rudeness, whose good breeding tires ;
 Nor yet the parson's, who would gladly come,
 Obsequious when abroad, though proud at home ; 440
 Nor can he much affect the neighb'ring peer,
 Whose toe of emulation treads too near ;
 But wisely seeks a more convenient friend,
 With whom, dismissing forms, he may unbend !
 A man whom marks of condescending grace
 Teach, while they flatter him, his proper place :
 Who comes when call'd, and at a word withdraws,
 Speaks with reserve, and listens with applause ;
 Some plain mechanic, who, without pretence
 To birth or wit, nor gives nor takes offence ; 450
 On whom he rests well-pleas'd his weary pow'rs,
 And talks and laughs away his vacant hours.
 The tide of life, swift always in its course,
 May run in cities with a brisker force,
 But no where with a current so serene,
 Or half so clear, as in the rural scene.
 Yet how fallacious is all earthly bliss,
 What obvious truths the wisest heads may miss ;
 Some pleasures live a month, and some a year,
 But short the date of all we gather here ; 460
 No happiness is felt, except the true,
 That does not charm the more for being new.
 This observation, as it chanc'd, not made,
 Or if the thought occur'd, not duly weigh'd,
 He sighs—for, after all, by slow degrees,
 The spot he lov'd has lost the pow'r to please ;
 To cross his ambling pony day by day,
 Seems at the best but dreaming life away ;

The prospect, such as might enchant despair,
 He views it not, or sees no beauty there ; 470
 With aching heart, and discontented looks,
 Returns at noon to billiards or to books,
 But feels, while grasping at his faded joys,
 A secret thirst of his renounc'd employs.
 He chides the tardiness of ev'ry post,
 Pants to be told of battles won or lost,
 Blames his own indolence, observes, though late,
 'Tis criminal to leave a sinking state,
 Flies to the levee, and, receiv'd with grace,
 Kneels, kisses hands, and shines again in place. 480

From THE SOFA

The Task (written July 1783 to September 1784 ; published 1785),
 Book i

FOR I have lov'd the rural walk through lanes
 Of grassy swarth, close cropt by nibbling sheep, 110
 And skirted thick with intertexture firm
 Of thorny boughs ; have lov'd the rural walk
 O'er hills, through valleys, and by rivers' brink,
 E'er since a truant boy I pass'd my bounds
 T' enjoy a ramble on the banks of Thames ;
 And still remember, nor without regret
 Of hours that sorrow since has much endear'd,
 How oft, my slice of pocket store consum'd,
 Still hung'ring, pennyless and far from home,
 I fed on scarlet hips and stony haws, 120
 Or blushing crabs, or berries, that emboss
 The bramble, black as jet, or sloes austere.
 Hard fare ! but such as boyish appetite
 Disdains not ; nor the palate, undeprav'd
 By culinary arts, unsav'ry deems.
 No SOFA then awaited my return ;
 Nor SOFA then I needed. Youth repairs
 His wasted spirits quickly, by long toil

Incurring short fatigue ; and, though our years
 As life declines speed rapidly away, 130
 And not a year but pilfers as he goes
 Some youthful grace that age would gladly keep ;
 A tooth or auburn lock, and by degrees
 Their length and colour from the locks they spare ;
 Th' elastic spring of an unwearied foot
 That mounts the stile with ease, or leaps the fence,
 That play of lungs, inhaling and again
 Respiring freely the fresh air, that makes
 Swift pace or steep ascent no toil to me,
 Mine have not pilfer'd yet ; nor yet impair'd 140
 My relish of fair prospect ; scenes that sooth'd
 Or charm'd me young, no longer young, I find
 Still soothing and of pow'r to charm me still.
 And witness, dear companion of my walks,
 Whose arm this twentieth winter I perceive
 Fast lock'd in mine, with pleasure such as love,
 Confirm'd by long experience of thy worth
 And well-tried virtues, could alone inspire—
 Witness a joy that thou hast doubled long.
 Thou know'st my praise of nature most sincere, 150
 And that my raptures are not conjur'd up
 To serve occasions of poetic pomp,
 But genuine, and art partner of them all.
 How oft upon yon eminence our pace
 Has slacken'd to a pause, and we have borne
 The ruffling wind, scarce conscious that it blew,
 While admiration, feeding at the eye,
 And still unsated, dwelt upon the scene.
 Thence with what pleasure have we just discern'd
 The distant plough slow moving, and beside 160
 His lab'ring team, that swerv'd not from the track,
 The sturdy swain diminish'd to a boy !
 Here Ouse, slow winding through a level plain

Of spacious meads with cattle sprinkled o'er,
 Conducts the eye along its sinuous course
 Delighted. There, fast rooted in their bank,
 Stand, never overlook'd, our fav'rite elms,
 That screen the herdsman's solitary hut ;
 While far beyond, and overthwart the stream
 That, as with molten glass, inlays the vale, 170
 The sloping land recedes into the clouds ;
 Displaying on its varied side the grace
 Of hedge-row beauties numberless, square tow'r,
 Tall spire, from which the sound of cheerful bells
 Just undulates upon the list'ning ear,
 Groves, heaths, and smoking villages, remote.
 Scenes must be beautiful, which, daily view'd,
 Please daily, and whose novelty survives
 Long knowledge and the scrutiny of years.
 Praise justly due to those that I describe. 180

Nor rural sights alone, but rural sounds,
 Exhilarate the spirit, and restore
 The tone of languid Nature. Mighty winds,
 That sweep the skirt of some far-spreading wood
 Of ancient growth, make music not unlike
 The dash of ocean on his winding shore,
 And lull the spirit while they fill the mind ;
 Unnumber'd branches waving in the blast,
 And all their leaves fast flutt'ring, all at once.
 Nor less composure waits upon the roar 190
 Of distant floods, or on the softer voice
 Of neighboring fountain, or of rills that slip
 Through the cleft rock, and, chiming as they fall
 Upon loose pebbles, lose themselves at length
 In matted grass, that with a livelier green
 Betrays the secret of their silent course.
 Nature inanimate employs sweet sounds,
 But animated nature sweeter still,

To sooth and satisfy the human ear.
 Ten thousand warblers cheer the day, and one 200
 The live-long night : nor these alone, whose notes
 Nice finger'd art must emulate in vain,
 But cawing rooks, and kites that swim sublime
 In still repeated circles, screaming loud,
 The jay, the pie, and ev'n the boding owl
 That hails the rising moon, have charms for me.
 Sounds inharmonious in themselves and harsh,
 Yet heard in scenes where peace for ever reigns,
 And only there, please highly for their sake.

From THE TIME-PIECE

The Task, Book ii

ENGLAND, with all thy faults, I love thee still—
 My country ! and, while yet a nook is left
 Where English minds and manners may be found,
 Shall be constrain'd to love thee. Though thy clime
 Be fickle, and thy year most part deform'd 210
 With dripping rains, or wither'd by a frost,
 I would not yet exchange thy sullen skies,
 And fields without a flow'r, for warmer France
 With all her vines ; nor for Ausonia's groves
 Of golden fruitage, and her myrtle bow'rs.
 To shake thy senate, and from heights sublime
 Of patriot eloquence to flash down fire
 Upon thy foes, was never meant my task :
 But I can feel thy fortunes, and partake
 Thy joys and sorrows, with as true a heart 220
 As any thund'rer there. And I can feel
 Thy follies, too ; and with a just disdain
 Frown at effeminates, whose very looks
 Reflect dishonour on the land I love.
 How, in the name of soldiership and sense,

Should England prosper, when such things, as smooth
 And tender as a girl, all essenc'd o'er
 With odours, and as profligate as sweet ;
 Who sell their laurel for a myrtle wreath,
 And love when they should fight ; when such as these
 Presume to lay their hand upon the ark 231
 Of her magnificent and awful cause ?
 Time was when it was praise and boast enough
 In ev'ry clime, and travel where we might,
 That we were born her children. Praise enough
 To fill th' ambition of a private man,
 That Chatham's language was his mother tongue,
 And Wolfe's great name compatriot with his own.
 Farewell those honours, and farewell with them
 The hope of such hereafter ! They have fall'n 240
 Each in his field of glory ; one in arms,
 And one in council—Wolfe upon the lap
 Of smiling victory that moment won,
 And Chatham heart-sick of his country's shame !
 They made us many soldiers. Chatham, still
 Consulting England's happiness at home,
 Secur'd it by an unforgiving frown,
 If any wrong'd her. Wolfe, where'er he fought,
 Put so much of his heart into his act,
 That his example had a magnet's force, 250
 And all were swift to follow whom all lov'd.
 Those suns are set. Oh, rise some other such !
 Or all that we have left is empty talk
 Of old achievements, and despair of new.

From THE WINTER EVENING

The Task, Book iv

HARK ! 'tis the twanging horn o'er yonder bridge,
 That with its wearisome but needful length
 Bestrides the wintry flood, in which the moon
 Sees her unwrinkled face reflected bright ;—
 He comes, the herald of a noisy world,
 With spatter'd boots, strapp'd waist, and frozen locks ;
 News from all nations lumb'ring at his back.
 True to his charge, the close-pack'd load behind,
 Yet careless what he brings, his one concern
 Is to conduct it to the destin'd inn : 10
 And, having dropp'd th' expected bag, pass on.
 He whistles as he goes, light-hearted wretch,
 Cold and yet cheerful : messenger of grief
 Perhaps to thousands, and of joy to some ;
 To him indiff'rent whether grief or joy.
 Houses in ashes, and the fall of stocks,
 Births, deaths, and marriages, epistles wet
 With tears, that trickled down the writer's cheeks
 Fast as the periods from his fluent quill,
 Or charg'd with am'rous sighs of absent swains, 20
 Or nymphs responsive, equally affect
 His horse and him, unconscious of them all.
 But oh th' important budget ! usher'd in
 With such heart-shaking music, who can say
 What are its tidings ? have our troops awak'd ?
 Or do they still, as if with opium drugg'd,
 Snore to the murmurs of th' Atlantic wave ?
 Is India free ? and does she wear her plum'd
 And jewell'd turban with a smile of peace,
 Or do we grind her still ? The grand debate, 30
 The popular harangue, the tart reply,
 The logic, and the wisdom, and the wit,
 And the loud laugh—I long to know them all ;

I burn to set th' imprison'd wranglers free,
And give them voice and utt'rance once again.

Now stir the fire, and close the shutters fast,
Let fall the curtains, wheel the sofa round,
And, while the bubbling and loud-hissing urn
Throws up a steamy column, and the cups,
That cheer but not inebriate, wait on each,
So let us welcome peaceful ev'ning in.

40

.
Come, Ev'ning, once again, season of peace ;
Return, sweet Ev'ning, and continue long !
Methinks I see thee in the streaky west,
With matron-step slow-moving, while the night
Treads on thy sweeping train ; one hand employ'd
In letting fall the curtain of repose
On bird and beast, the other charg'd for man
With sweet oblivion of the cares of day :
Not sumptuously adorn'd, nor needing aid,
Like homely featur'd night, of clust'ring gems ;
A star or two, just twinkling on thy brow,
Suffices thee ; save that the moon is thine
No less than her's, not worn indeed on high
With ostentatious pageantry, but set
With modest grandeur in thy purple zone,
Resplendent less, but of an ampler round.
Come then, and thou shalt find thy vot'ry calm,
Or make me so. Composure is thy gift :
And, whether I devote thy gentle hours
To books, to music, or the poet's toil ;
To weaving nets for bird-alluring fruit ;
Or twining silken threads round iv'ry reels,
When they command whom man was born to please
I slight thee not, but make thee welcome still.

250

260

I saw the woods and fields, at close of day,
 A variegated show ; the meadows green,
 Though faded ; and the lands, where lately wav'd
 The golden harvest, of a mellow brown,
 Upturn'd so lately by the forceful share.
 I saw far off the weedy fallows smile
 With verdure not unprofitable, graz'd
 By flocks, fast feeding, and selecting each
 His fav'rite herb ; while all the leafless groves,
 That skirt th' horizon, wore a sable hue, 320
 Scarce notic'd in the kindred dusk of eve.
 To-morrow brings a change, a total change !
 Which even now, though silently perform'd,
 And slowly, and by most unfelt, the face
 Of universal nature undergoes.
 Fast falls a fleecy show'r : the downy flakes,
 Descending, and with never-ceasing lapse,
 Softly alighting upon all below,
 Assimilate all objects. Earth receives
 Gladly the thick'ning mantle ; and the green 330
 And tender blade, that fear'd the chilling blast,
 Escapes unhurt beneath so warm a veil.

In such a world ; so thorny, and where none
 Finds happiness unblighted ; or, if found,
 Without some thistly sorrow at its side ;
 It seems the part of wisdom, and no sin
 Against the law of love, to measure lots
 With less distinguish'd than ourselves ; that thus
 We may with patience bear our mod'rate ills,
 And sympathise with others, suff'ring more. 340
 Ill fares the trav'ler now, and he that stalks
 In pond'rous boots beside his reeking team.
 The wain goes heavily, impeded sore
 By congregated loads adhering close
 To the clogg'd wheels ; and in its sluggish pace,

Noiseless, appears a moving hill of snow.
 The toiling steeds expand the nostril wide,
 While ev'ry breath, by respiration strong
 Forc'd downward, is consolidated soon
 Upon their jutting chests. He, form'd to bear 350
 The pelting brunt of the tempestuous night,
 With half-shut eyes, and pucker'd cheeks, and teeth
 Presented bare against the storm, plods on.
 One hand secures his hat, save when with both
 He brandishes his pliant length of whip,
 Resounding oft, and never heard in vain.
 Oh happy ; and, in my account, denied
 That sensibility of pain with which
 Refinement is endued, thrice happy thou !
 Thy frame, robust and hardy, feels indeed 360
 The piercing cold, but feels it unimpair'd.
 The learned finger never need explore
 Thy vig'rous pulse ; and the unhealthful east,
 That breathes the spleen, and searches ev'ry bone
 Of the infirm, is wholesome air to thee.
 Thy days roll on, exempt from household care ;
 The waggon is thy wife ; and the poor beasts,
 That drag the dull companion to and fro,
 Thine helpless charge, dependent on thy care.
 Ah, treat them kindly ! rude as thou appear'st, 370
 Yet show that thou hast mercy ! which the great,
 With needless hurry whirl'd from place to place,
 Humane as they would seem, not always show.
 Poor, yet industrious, modest, quiet, neat ;
 Such claim compassion in a night like this,
 And have a friend in ev'ry feeling heart.
 Warm'd, while it lasts, by labour, all day long
 They brave the season, and yet find at eve,
 Ill clad and fed but sparely, time to cool.
 The frugal housewife trembles when she lights 380

Her scanty stock of brush-wood, blazing clear,
 But dying soon, like all terrestrial joys.
 The few small embers left she nurses well ;
 And, while her infant race, with outspread hands
 And crowded knees, sit cowering o'er the sparks,
 Retires, content to quake, so they be warm'd.
 The man feels least, as more inur'd than she
 To winter, and the current in his veins
 More briskly mov'd by his severer toil ;
 Yet he, too, finds his own distress in their's. 390
 The taper soon extinguish'd, which I saw
 Dangled along at the cold finger's end
 Just when the day declin'd, and the brown loaf
 Lodg'd on the shelf, half eaten, without sauce
 Of sav'ry cheese, or butter, costlier still ;
 Sleep seems their only refuge : for, alas,
 Where penury is felt the thought is chain'd,
 And sweet colloquial pleasures are but few !
 With all this thrift they thrive not. All the care
 Ingenious parsimony takes but just 400
 Saves the small inventory, bed, and stool,
 Skillet, and old carv'd chest, from public sale.
 They live, and live without extorted alms
 From grudging hands ; but other boast have none
 To sooth their honest pride, that scorns to beg,
 Nor comfort else, but in their mutual love.
 I praise you much, ye meek and patient pair,
 For ye are worthy ; choosing rather far
 A dry but independent crust, hard earn'd,
 And eaten with a sigh, than to endure 410
 The rugged frowns and insolent rebuffs
 Of knaves in office, partial in the work
 Of distribution ; lib'ral of their aid
 To clam'rous importunity in rags,
 But oft-times deaf to suppliants, who would blush

To wear a tatter'd garb however coarse,
 Whom famine cannot reconcile to filth :
 These ask with painful shyness, and, refus'd
 Because deserving, silently retire !
 But be ye of good courage ! Time itself 420
 Shall much befriend you. Time shall give increase ;
 And all your num'rous progeny, well-train'd,
 But helpless, in few years shall find their hands,
 And labour too. Meanwhile ye shall not want
 What, conscious of your virtues, we can spare,
 Nor what a wealthier than ourselves may send.
 I mean the man, who, when the distant poor
 Need help, denies them nothing but his name.

THE SHRUBBERY

WRITTEN IN A TIME OF AFFLICTION

Written 1773.—Published 1782

OH, happy shades—to me unblest !
 Friendly to peace, but not to me !
 How ill the scene that offers rest,
 And heart that cannot rest, agree !
 This glassy stream, that spreading pine,
 Those alders quiv'ring to the breeze,
 Might sooth a soul less hurt than mine,
 And please, if any thing could please. 8

But fix'd unalterable care
 Foregoes not what she feels within,
 Shows the same sadness ev'ry where,
 And slights the season and the scene.

For all that pleas'd in wood or lawn,
 While peace possess'd these silent bow'rs,
 Her animating smile withdrawn,
 Has lost its beauties and its pow'rs. 16

The saint or moralist should tread
 This moss-grown alley, musing, slow ;
 They seek, like me, the secret shade,
 But not, like me, to nourish woe !

Me fruitful scenes and prospects waste
 Alike admonish not to roam ;
 These tell me of enjoyments past,
 And those of sorrows yet to come.

24

THE NIGHTINGALE AND GLOW-WORM

Written February 1780.—Published 1782

A NIGHTINGALE, that all day long
 Had cheer'd the village with his song,
 Nor yet at eve his note suspended,
 Nor yet when eventide was ended,
 Began to feel, as well he might,
 The keen demands of appetite ;
 When, looking eagerly around,
 He spied far off, upon the ground,
 A something shining in the dark,
 And knew the glow-worm by his spark ;
 So, stooping down from hawthorn top,
 He thought to put him in his crop.
 The worm, aware of his intent,
 Harangu'd him thus, right eloquent—

Did you admire my lamp, quoth he,
 As much as I your minstrelsy,
 You would abhor to do me wrong,
 As much as I to spoil your song ;
 For 'twas the self-same pow'r divine
 Taught you to sing, and me to shine ;
 That you with music, I with light,
 Might beautify and cheer the night.

20

The songster heard his short oration,
 And, warbling out his approbation,
 Releas'd him, as my story tells,
 And found a supper somewhere else.
 Hence jarring sectaries may learn
 Their real int'rest to discern ;
 That brother should not war with brother,
 And worry and devour each other ; 30
 But sing and shine by sweet consent,
 Till life's poor transient night is spent,
 Respecting in each other's case
 The gifts of nature and of grace.
 Those Christians best deserve the name
 Who studiously make peace their aim ;
 Peace, both the duty and the prize
 Of him that creeps and him that flies.

BOADICEA : AN ODE

Written 1780.—Published 1782

WHEN the British warrior queen,
 Bleeding from the Roman rods,
 Sought, with an indignant mien,
 Counsel of her country's gods,
 Sage beneath a spreading oak
 Sat the Druid, hoary chief ;
 Ev'ry burning word he spoke
 Full of rage, and full of grief. 8
 Princess ! if our aged eyes
 Weep upon thy matchless wrongs,
 'Tis because resentment ties
 All the terrors of our tongues.

Rome shall perish—write that word

In the blood that she has spilt ;
Perish, hopeless and abhorr'd,
Deep in ruin as in guilt.

10

Rome, for empire far renown'd,
Tramples on a thousand states ;
Soon her pride shall kiss the ground—
Hark ! the Gaul is at her gates !

Other Romans shall arise,
Heedless of a soldier's name ;
Sounds, not arms, shall win the prize—
Harmony the path to fame.

24

Then the progeny that springs
From the forests of our land,
Arm'd with thunder, clad with wings,
Shall a wider world command.

Regions Cæsar never knew
Thy posterity shall sway,
Where his eagles never flew,
None invincible as they.

32

Such the bard's prophetic words,
Pregnant with celestial fire,
Bending, as he swept the chords
Of his sweet but awful lyre.

She, with all a monarch's pride,
Felt them in her bosom glow ;
Rush'd to battle, fought, and died ;
Dying, hurl'd them at the foe.

40

Ruffians, pitiless as proud,
Heav'n awards the vengeance due ;
Empire is on us bestow'd,
Shame and ruin wait for you ;

VERSES

POSED TO BE WRITTEN BY ALEXANDER SELKIRK DURING HIS
SOLITARY ABODE IN THE ISLAND OF JUAN FERNANDEZ

Written (?).—Published 1782

I AM monarch of all I survey,
My right there is none to dispute ;
From the centre all round to the sea,
I am lord of the fowl and the brute.
Oh, solitude ! where are the charms
That sages have seen in thy face ?
Better dwell in the midst of alarms,
Than reign in this horrible place.

14601

8

I am out of humanity's reach,
I must finish my journey alone,
Never hear the sweet music of speech ;
I start at the sound of my own.
The beasts, that roam over the plain,
My form with indifference see ;
They are so unacquainted with man,
Their tameness is shocking to me.

16

Society, friendship, and love,
Divinely bestow'd upon man,
Oh, had I the wings of a dove,
How soon would I taste you again !
My sorrows I then might assuage
In the ways of religion and truth,
Might learn from the wisdom of age,
And be cheer'd by the sallies of youth.

24

Religion ! what treasure untold
Resides in that heavenly word !
More precious than silver and gold,
Or all that this earth can afford.

But the sound of the church-going bell
 These vallies and rocks never heard,
 Ne'er sigh'd at the sound of a knell,
 Or smil'd when a sabbath appear'd.

32

Ye winds, that have made me your sport,
 Convey to this desolate shore
 Some cordial endearing report
 Of a land I shall visit no more.
 My friends, do they now and then send
 A wish or a thought after me ?
 O tell me I yet have a friend,
 Though a friend I am never to see.

40

How fleet is a glance of the mind !
 Compar'd with the speed of its flight,
 The tempest itself lags behind,
 And the swift wing'd arrows of light.
 When I think of my own native land,
 In a moment I seem to be there ;
 But alas ! recollection at hand
 Soon hurries me back to despair.

48

But the sea-fowl is gone to her nest,
 The beast is laid down in his lair,
 Ev'n here is a season of rest,
 And I to my cabin repair.
 There is mercy in every place ;
 And mercy, encouraging thought !
 Gives even affliction a grace,
 And reconciles man to his lot.

56

ON THE LOSS OF THE 'ROYAL GEORGE'

WRITTEN WHEN THE NEWS ARRIVED,

by desire of Lady Austen, who wanted words to the March in Scipio

Written September 1782.—Published 1803

TOLL for the brave—
 The brave ! that are no more :
 All sunk beneath the wave,
 Fast by their native shore.
 Eight hundred of the brave,
 Whose courage well was tried,
 Had made the vessel heel
 And laid her on her side ;
 A land-breeze shook the shrouds,
 And she was overset ;
 Down went the *Royal George*,
 With all her crew complete.

12

Toll for the brave—
 Brave Kempenfelt is gone,
 His last sea-fight is fought,
 His work of glory done.
 It was not in the battle,
 No tempest gave the shock,
 She sprang no fatal leak,
 She ran upon no rock ;
 His sword was in the sheath,
 His fingers held the pen,
 When Kempenfelt went down
 With twice four hundred men.

24

Weigh the vessel up,
 Once dreaded by our foes,
 And mingle with your cup
 The tears that England owes ;

Her timbers yet are sound,
 And she may float again,
 Full charg'd with England's thunder;
 And plough the distant main ;
 But Kempenfelt is gone,
 His victories are o'er ;
 And he and his Eight hundred
 Must plough the wave no more. 36

THE DIVERTING HISTORY OF JOHN GILPIN

SHOWING HOW HE WENT FARTHER THAN HE INTENDED, AND CAME
 SAFE HOME AGAIN

Written October 1782.—Published in *The Public Advertiser*,
 November 14, 1782, and with *The Task*, 1785

JOHN GILPIN was a citizen
 Of credit and renown,
 A train-band captain eke was he
 Of famous London town.

John Gilpin's spouse said to her dear—
 Though wedded we have been
 These twice ten tedious years, yet we
 No holiday have seen. 8

To-morrow is our wedding-day,
 And we will then repair
 Unto the Bell at Edmonton
 All in a chaise and pair.

My sister, and my sister's child,
 Myself, and children three,
 Will fill the chaise ; so you must ride
 On horseback after we. 16

He soon replied—I do admire
 Of womankind but one,
 And you are she, my dearest dear,
 Therefore it shall be done.

I am a linen-draper bold,
 As all the world doth know,
 And my good friend the calender
 Will lend his horse to go.

24

Quoth Mrs. Gilpin—That 's well said ;
 And, for that wine is dear,
 We will be furnish'd with our own,
 Which is both bright and clear.

John Gilpin kiss'd his loving wife ;
 O'erjoy'd was he to find
 That, though on pleasure she was bent,
 She had a frugal mind.

32

The morning came, the chaise was brought,
 But yet was not allow'd
 To drive up to the door, lest all
 Should say that she was proud.

So three doors off the chaise was stay'd,
 Where they did all get in ;
 Six precious souls, and all agog
 To dash through thick and thin !

40

Smack went the whip, round went the wheels,
 Were never folk so glad,
 The stones did rattle underneath.
 As if Cheapside were mad.

John Gilpin at his horse's side
 Seiz'd fast the flowing mane,
 And up he got, in haste to ride,
 But soon came down again ;

48

For saddle-tree scarce reached had he,
 His journey to begin,
 When, turning round his head, he saw
 Three customers come in.

So down he came ; for loss of time,
 Although it griev'd him sore,
 Yet loss of pence, full well he knew,
 Would trouble him much more. 56

'Twas long before the customers
 Were suited to their mind,
 When Betty screaming came down stairs—
 ' The wine is left behind ! '

Good lack ! quoth he—yet bring it me,
 My leathern belt likewise,
 In which I bear my trusty sword
 When I do exercise. 64

Now mistress Gilpin (careful soul !)
 Had two stone bottles found,
 To hold the liquor that she lov'd,
 And keep it safe and sound.

Each bottle had a curling ear,
 Through which the belt he drew,
 And hung a bottle on each side,
 To make his balance true. 72

Then, over all, that he might be
 Equipp'd from top to toe,
 His long red cloak, well brush'd and neat,
 He manfully did throw.

Now see him mounted once again
 Upon his nimble steed,
 Full slowly pacing o'er the stones,
 With caution and good heed ! 80

But, finding soon a smoother road
 Beneath his well-shod feet,
 The snorting beast began to trot,
 Which gall'd him in his seat.

So, Fair and softly, John he cried,
 But John he cried in vain ;
 That trot became a gallop soon,
 In spite of curb and rein.

88

So stooping down, as needs he must
 Who cannot sit upright,
 He grasp'd the mane with both his hands,
 And eke with all his might.

His horse, who never in that sort
 Had handled been before,
 What thing upon his back had got
 Did wonder more and more.

96

Away went Gilpin, neck or nought ;
 Away went hat and wig !—
 He little dreamt, when he set out,
 Of running such a rig !

The wind did blow, the cloak did fly,
 Like streamer long and gay,
 Till, loop and button failing both,
 At last it flew away.

104

Then might all people well discern
 The bottles he had slung ;
 A bottle swinging at each side,
 As hath been said or sung.

The dogs did bark, the children scream'd,
 Up flew the windows all ;
 And ev'ry soul cried out—Well done !
 As loud as he could bawl.

112

Away went Gilpin—who but he ?
 His fame soon spread around—
 He carries weight ! he rides a race !
 'Tis for a thousand pound !

And still, as fast as he drew near,
 'Twas wonderful to view
 How in a trice the turnpike-men
 Their gates wide open threw. 120

And now, as he went bowing down
 His reeking head full low,
 The bottles twain behind his back
 Were shatter'd at a blow.

Down ran the wine into the road,
 Most piteous to be seen,
 Which made his horse's flanks to smoke
 As they had basted been. 128

But still he seem'd to carry weight,
 With leathern girdle brac'd ;
 For all might see the bottle-necks
 Still dangling at his waist.

Thus all through merry Islington
 These gambols he did play,
 And till he came unto the Wash
 Of Edmonton so gay. 136

And there he threw the wash about
 On both sides of the way,
 Just like unto a trundling mop,
 Or a wild goose at play.

At Edmonton his loving wife
 From the balcony spied
 Her tender husband, wond'ring much
 To see how he did ride. 144

Stop, stop, John Gilpin !—Here's the house—

They all at once did cry ;
The dinner waits, and we are tir'd :
Said Gilpin—So am I !

But yet his horse was not a whit
Inclin'd to tarry there ;
For why ?—his owner had a house
Full ten miles off, at Ware.

152

So like an arrow swift he flew,
Shot by an archer strong ;
So did he fly—which brings me to
The middle of my song.

Away went Gilpin, out of breath,
And sore against his will,
Till at his friend the calender's
His horse at last stood still.

160

The calender, amaz'd to see
His neighbour in such trim,
Laid down his pipe, flew to the gate,
And thus accosted him :—

What news ? what news ? your tidings tell ;
Tell me you must and shall—
Say why bare-headed you are come,
Or why you come at all ?

168

Now Gilpin had a pleasant wit,
And lov'd a timely joke ;
And thus unto the calender
In merry guise he spoke :—

I came because your horse would come ;
And, if I well forebode,
My hat and wig will soon be here—
They are upon the road.

176

The calender, right glad to find
 His friend in merry pin,
 Return'd him not a single word,
 But to the house went in ;

Whence straight he came with hat and wig ;
 A wig that flow'd behind,
 A hat not much the worse for wear,
 Each comely in its kind.

184

He held them up, and, in his turn,
 Thus show'd his ready wit—
 My head is twice as big as your's,
 They therefore needs must fit.

But let me scrape the dirt away
 That hangs upon your face ;
 And stop and eat, for well you may
 Be in a hungry case.

192

Said John—It is my wedding-day,
 And all the world would stare,
 If wife should dine at Edmonton
 And I should dine at Ware !

So, turning to his horse, he said—
 I am in haste to dine ;
 'Twas for your pleasure you came here,
 You shall go back for mine.

200

Ah, luckless speech, and bootless boast !
 For which he paid full dear ;
 For, while he spake, a braying ass
 Did sing most loud and clear ;

Whereat his horse did snort, as he
 Had heard a lion roar,
 And gallop'd off with all his might,
 As he had done before,

208

Away went Gilpin, and away
 Went Gilpin's hat and wig !
 He lost them sooner than at first—
 For why ?—they were too big !

Now, mistress Gilpin, when she saw
 Her husband posting down
 Into the country far away,
 She pull'd out half a crown ;

216

And thus unto the youth she said
 That drove them to the Bell—
 This shall be yours when you bring back
 My husband safe and well.

The youth did ride, and soon did meet
 John coming back amain ;
 Whom in a trice he tried to stop,
 By catching at his rein ;

224

But, not performing what he meant,
 And gladly would have done,
 The frighted steed he frighted more,
 And made him faster run.

Away went Gilpin, and away
 Went post-boy at his heels !—
 The post-boy's horse right glad to miss
 The lumb'ring of the wheels.

232

Six gentlemen upon the road,
 Thus seeing Gilpin fly,
 With post-boy scamp'ring in the rear,
 They rais'd the hue and cry :

Stop thief ! stop thief !—a highwayman !
 Not one of them was mute ;
 And all and each that pass'd that way
 Did join in the pursuit.

240

And now the turnpike gates again

Flew open in short space ;

The toll-men thinking, as before,

That Gilpin rode a race.

And so he did—and won it too !—

For he got first to town ;

Nor stopp'd till where he had got up

He did again get down.

248

Now let us sing—Long live the king,

And Gilpin long live he ;

And, when he next doth ride abroad,

May I be there to see !

EPITAPH ON A HARE

Written March 1783.—Published in *The Gentleman's Magazine*,
December 1784 ; afterwards in 1800

HERE lies, whom hound did ne'er pursuc,

Nor swifter greyhound follow,

Whose foot ne'er tainted morning dew,

Nor ear heard huntsman's hallo',

Old Tiney, surliest of his kind,

Who, nurs'd with tender care,

And to domestic bounds confin'd,

Was still a wild Jack-hare.

8

Though duly from my hand he took

His pittance ev'ry night,

He did it with a jealous look,

And, when he could, would bite.

His diet was of wheaten bread,

And milk, and oats, and straw,

Thistles, or lettuces instead,

With sand to scour his maw.

16

On twigs of hawthorn he regal'd,
 On pippins' russet peel ;
 And, when his juicy salads fail'd,
 Slic'd carrot pleas'd him well.

A Turkey carpet was his lawn,
 Whereon he lov'd to bound,
 To skip and gambol like a fawn,
 And swing his rump around.

24

His frisking was at evening hours,
 For then he lost his fear ;
 But most before approaching show'rs,
 Or when a storm drew near.

Eight years and five round-rolling moons
 He thus saw steal away,
 Dozing out all his idle noons,
 And ev'ry night at play.

32

I kept him for his humour' sake,
 For he would oft beguile
 My heart of thoughts that made it ache,
 And force me to a smile.

But now, beneath this walnut-shade
 He finds his long, last home,
 And waits in snug concealment laid,
 'Till gentler Puss shall come.

40

He, still more aged, feels the shocks
 From which no care can save,
 And, partner once of Tiney's box,
 Must soon partake his grave,

THE POPLAR-FIELD

Written 1784.—Published in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, January 1785; afterwards in 1800

THE poplars are fell'd, farewell to the shade
And the whispering sound of the cool colonnade,
The winds play no longer, and sing in the leaves,
Nor Ouse on his bosom their image receives.

Twelve years have claps'd since I first took a view
Of my favourite field and the bank where they grew,
And now in the grass behold they are laid,
And the tree is my seat that once lent me a shade. 8

The blackbird has fled to another retreat
Where the hazels afford him a screen from the heat,
And the scene where his melody charm'd me before,
Resounds with his sweet-flowing ditty no more.

My fugitive years are all hasting away,
And I must ere long lie as lowly as they,
With a turf on my breast, and a stone at my head,
Ere another such grove shall arise in its stead. 16

'Tis a sight to engage me, if any thing can,
To muse on the perishing pleasures of man;
Though his life be a dream, his enjoyments, I see,
Have a being less durable even than he.

THE DOG AND THE WATER-LILY

NO FABLE

Written August 1788.—Published in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, December 1791; afterwards in 1798

THE noon was shady, and soft airs
Swept Ouse's silent tide,
When, 'scap'd from literary cares,
I wander'd on his side.

My spaniel, prettiest of his race,
And high in pedigree,

(Two nymphs, adorn'd with ev'ry grace,
That spaniel found for me)

8

Now wanton'd lost in flags and reeds,
Now starting into sight
Pursued the swallow o'er the meads
With scarce a slower flight.

It was the time when Ouse display'd
His lilies newly blown ;
Their beauties I intent survey'd ;
And one I wish'd my own.

16

With cane extended far I sought
To steer it close to land ;
But still the prize, though nearly caught,
Escap'd my eager hand.

Beau marked my unsuccessful pains
With fixt consid'rate face,
And puzzling set his puppy brains
To comprehend the case.

24

But with a chirrup clear and strong,
Dispersing all his dream,
I thence withdrew, and follow'd long
The windings of the stream.

My ramble finish'd, I return'd.
Beau trotting far before
The floating wreath again discern'd,
And plunging left the shore.

32

I saw him with that lily cropp'd
Impatient swim to meet
My quick approach, and soon he dropp'd
The treasure at my feet.

Charm'd with the sight, the world, I cried,
Shall hear of this thy deed,
My dog shall mortify the pride
Of man's superior breed ;

40

But, chief, myself I will enjoin,
 Awake at duty's call,
 To show a love as prompt as thine
 To Him who gives me all.

ON THE RECEIPT OF MY MOTHER'S PICTURE OUT OF NORFOLK

THE GIFT OF MY COUSIN ANN BODIAM

Written February 1790.—Published 1798

OH that those lips had language ! Life has pass'd
 With me but roughly since I heard thee last.
 Those lips are thine—thy own sweet smiles I see,
 The same that oft in childhood solaced me ;
 Voice only fails, else, how distinct they say,
 ' Grieve not, my child, chase all thy fears away ! '
 The meek intelligence of those dear eyes
 (Blest be the art that can immortalize,
 The art that baffles time's tyrannic claim
 To quench it) here shines on me still the same. 10

Faithful remembrancer of one so dear,
 Oh welcome guest, though unexpected, here !
 Who bidd'st me honour with an artless song,
 Affectionate, a mother lost so long,
 I will obey, not willingly alone,
 But gladly, as the precept were her own ;
 And, while that face renews my filial grief,
 Fancy shall weave a charm for my relief—
 Shall steep me in Elysian reverie,
 A momentary dream, that thou art she. 20

My mother ! when I learn'd that thou wast dead,
 Say, wast thou conscious of the tears I shed ?
 Hover'd thy spirit o'er thy sorrowing son,
 Wretch even then, life's journey just begun ?
 Perhaps thou gav'st me, though unseen, a kiss ;
 Perhaps a tear, if souls can weep in bliss—
 Ah that maternal smile ! it answers—Yes,

I heard the bell toll'd on thy burial day,
 I saw the hearse that bore thee slow away,
 And, turning from my nurs'ry window, drew 30
 A long, long sigh, and wept a last adieu !
 But was it such ?—It was.—Where thou art gone
 Adieus and farewells are a sound unknown.
 May I but meet thee on that peaceful shore,
 The parting sound shall pass my lips no more !
 Thy maidens griev'd themselves at my concern,
 Oft gave me promise of a quick return.
 What ardently I wish'd, I long believ'd,
 And, disappointed still, was still deceiv'd ;
 By disappointment every day beguil'd, 40
 Dupe of *to-morrow* even from a child.
 Thus many a sad to-morrow came and went,
 Till, all my stock of infant sorrow spent,
 I learn'd at last submission to my lot ;
 But, though I less deplor'd thee, ne'er forgot.

Where once we dwelt our name is heard no more,
 Children not thine have trod my nurs'ry floor ;
 And where the gard'ner Robin, day by day,
 Drew me to school along the public way,
 Delighted with my bauble coach, and wrapt 50
 In scarlet mantle warm, and velvet capt,
 'Tis now become a history little known,
 That once we call'd the past'ral house our own.
 Short-liv'd possession ! but the record fair
 That mem'ry keeps of all thy kindness there,
 Still outlives many a storm that has effac'd
 A thousand other themes less deeply trac'd.
 Thy nightly visits to my chamber made,
 That thou might'st know me safe and warmly laid ;
 Thy morning bounties ere I left my home, 60
 The biscuit, or confectionary plum ;
 The fragrant waters on my cheeks bestow'd
 By thy own hand, till fresh they shone and glow'd ;

All this, and more endearing still than all,
 Thy constant flow of love, that knew no fall,
 Ne'er roughen'd by those cataracts and brakes
 That humour interpos'd too often makes ;
 All this still legible in mem'ry's page,
 And still to be so, to my latest age,
 Adds joy to duty, makes me glad to pay 70
 Such honours to thee as my numbers may ;
 Perhaps a frail memorial, but sincere,
 Not scorn'd in heav'n, though little notic'd here.

Could time, his flight revers'd, restore the hours,
 When, playing with thy vesture's tissued flow'rs,
 The violet, the pink, and jessamine,
 I prick'd them into paper with a pin,
 (And thou wast happier than myself the while,
 Would'st softly speak, and stroke my head and smile)
 Could those few pleasant hours again appear, 80
 Might one wish bring them, would I wish them here ?
 I would not trust my heart—the dear delight
 Seems so to be desir'd, perhaps I might.—
 But no—what here we call our life is such,
 So little to be lov'd, and thou so much,
 That I should ill requite thee to constrain
 Thy unbound spirit into bonds again.

Thou, as a gallant bark from Albion's coast
 (The storms all weather'd and the ocean cross'd)
 Shoots into port at some well-haven'd isle, 90
 Where spices breathe and brighter seasons smile,
 There sits quiescent on the floods that show
 Her beauteous form reflected clear below,
 While airs impregnated with incense play
 Around her, fanning light her streamers gay ;
 So thou, with sails how swift ! hast reach'd the shore
 ' Where tempests never beat nor billows roar,'
 And thy lov'd consort on the dang'rous tide
 Of life, long since, has anchor'd at thy side.

But me, scarce hoping to attain that rest, 100
 Always from port withheld, always distress'd—
 Me howling winds drive devious, tempest toss'd,
 Sails ript, seams op'ning wide, and compass lost,
 And day by day some current's thwarting force
 Sets me more distant from a prosp'rous course.
 But oh the thought, that thou art safe, and he !
 That thought is joy, arrive what may to me.
 My boast is not that I deduce my birth
 From loins enthron'd, and rulers of the earth ;
 But higher far my proud pretensions rise— 110
 The son of parents pass'd into the skies.
 And now, farewell—time, unrevok'd, has run
 His wonted course, yet what I wish'd is done.
 By contemplation's help, not sought in vain,
 I seem t' have liv'd my childhood o'er again ;
 To have renew'd the joys that once were mine,
 Without the sin of violating thine :
 And, while the wings of fancy still are free,
 And I can view this mimic shew of thee,
 Time has but half succeeded in his theft— 120
 Thyself remov'd, thy power to sooth me left.

THE RETIRED CAT

Written 1791.—Published 1803

A POET'S cat, sedate and grave,
 As poet well could wish to have,
 Was much addicted to inquire
 For nooks, to which she might retire,
 And where, secure as mouse in chink,
 She might repose, or sit and think.
 I know not where she caught the trick—
 Nature perhaps herself had cast her
 In such a mould PHILOSOPHIQUE,
 Or else she learn'd it of her master, 10

Sometimes ascending, debonair,
An apple-tree or lofty pear,
Lodg'd with convenience in the fork,
She watched the gard'ner at his work ;
Sometimes her ease and solace sought
In an old empty wat'ring pot,
There wanting nothing, save a fan,
To seem some nymph in her sedan,
Apparell'd in exactest sort,
And ready to be borne to court.

20

But love of change it seems has place
Not only in our wiser race ;
Cats also feel as well as we
That passion's force, and so did she.
Her climbing, she began to find,
Expos'd her too much to the wind,
And the old utensil of tin
Was cold and comfortless within :
She therefore wish'd instead of those,
Some place of more serene repose,
Where neither cold might come, nor air
Too rudely wanton with her hair,
And sought it in the likeliest mode
Within her master's snug abode.

30

A draw'r,—it chanc'd, at bottom lin'd
With linen of the softest kind,
With such as merchants introduce
From India, for the ladies' use,—
A draw'r impending o'er the rest,
Half open in the topmost chest,
Of depth enough, and none to spare,
Invited her to slumber there.
Puss with delight beyond expression,
Survey'd the scene, and took possession.
Recumbent at her ease ere long,
And lull'd by her own hum-drum song,

40

She left the cares of life behind,
 And slept as she would sleep her last,
 When in came, housewifely inclin'd,
 The chambermaid, and shut it fast, 50
 By no malignity impell'd,
 But all unconscious whom it held.

Awaken'd by the shock (cried puss)
 Was ever cat attended thus !
 The open draw'r was left, I see,
 Merely to prove a nest for me,
 For soon as I was well compos'd,
 Then came the maid, and it was closed :
 How smooth these 'kerchiefs, and how sweet,
 O what a delicate retreat ! 60
 I will resign myself to rest
 Till Sol, declining in the west,
 Shall call to supper ; when, no doubt,
 Susan will come and let me out.

The evening came, the sun descended,
 And puss remain'd still unattended.
 The night roll'd tardily away,
 (With her indeed 'twas never day)
 The sprightly morn her course renew'd,
 The evening gray again ensued, 70
 And puss came into mind no more.
 Than if entomb'd the day before..
 With hunger pinch'd, and pinch'd for room,
 She now presag'd approaching doom,
 Not slept a single wink, or purr'd,
 Conscious of jeopardy incurr'd.

That night, by chance, the poet watching,
 Heard an inexplicable scratching,
 His noble heart went pit-a-pat,
 And to himself he said—what's that ? 80
 He drew the curtain at his side,
 And forth he peep'd, but nothing spied.

Yet, by his ear directed, guess'd
 Something imprison'd in the chest,
 And doubtful what, with prudent care,
 Resolv'd it should continue there.
 At length a voice, which well he knew,
 A long and melancholy mew,
 Saluting his poetic ears,
 Consol'd him, and dispell'd his fears ; 90
 He left his bed, he trod the floor,
 He 'gan in haste the draw'rs explore,
 The lowest first, and without stop,
 The rest in order to the top.
 For 'tis a truth well known to most,
 That whatsoever thing is lost,
 We seek it, ere it come to light,
 In ev'ry cranny but the right.
 Forth skipp'd the cat ; not now replete
 As erst with airy self-conceit, 100
 Nor in her own fond apprehension,
 A theme for all the world's attention,
 But modest, sober, cur'd of all
 Her notions hyperbolical,
 And wishing for a place of rest
 Any thing rather than a chest :
 Then stept the poet into bed,
 With this reflexion in his head :

MORAL

Beware of too sublime a sense
 Of your own worth and consequence ! 110
 The man who dreams himself so great,
 And his importance of such weight,
 That all around, in all that's done,
 Must move and act for him alone,
 Will learn, in school of tribulation,
 The folly of his expectation.

EPITAPH ON FOP

A DOG BELONGING TO LADY THROCKMORTON

Written August 1792.—Published 1803

THOUGH once a puppy, and though Fop by name,
 Here moulders one, whose bones some honour claim ;
 No sycophant, although of spaniel race !
 And though no hound, a martyr to the chase !
 Ye squirrels, rabbits, leverets, rejoice !
 Your haunts no longer echo to his voice.
 This record of his fate exulting view,
 He died worn out with vain pursuit of you.
 ‘ Yes ! ’ the indignant shade of Fop replies,
 ‘ And worn with vain pursuit, man also dies.’

10

AN EPITAPH

Written 1792.—Published 1815

HERE lies one, who never drew
 Blood himself, yet many slew ;
 Gave the gun its aim, and figure
 Made in field, yet ne’er pulled trigger.
 Armed men have gladly made
 Him their guide, and him obey’d ;
 At his signified desire,
 Would advance, present, and fire—
 Stout he was, and large of limb,
 Scores have fled at sight of him ;
 And to all this fame he rose
 Only following his nosé.
 Neptune was he call’d, not he
 Who controls the boist’rous sea,
 But of happier command,
 Neptune of the furrow’d land ;
 And, your wonder vain to shorten,
Pointer to Sir John Throckmorton.

SONNET TO MRS. UNWIN

Written May 1793.—Published 1803

MARY ! I want a lyre with other strings ;
 Such aid from Heaven as some have feign'd they drew !
 An eloquence scarce given to mortals, new,
 And undebas'd by praise of meaner things !
 That, ere through age or woe I shed my wings,
 I may record thy worth, with honour due,
 In verse as musical as thou art true,—
 Verse, that immortalizes whom it sings !
 But thou hast little need : there is a book,
 By seraphs writ with beams of heav'nly light, 10
 On which the eyes of God not rarely look ;
 A chronicle of actions just and bright !
 There all thy deeds, my faithful Mary, shine,
 And since thou own'st that praise, I spare thee mine.

ON A SPANIEL CALLED BEAU

KILLING A YOUNG BIRD

Written July 1793.—Published 1803

A SPANIEL, Beau, that fares like you,
 Well-fed, and at his ease,
 Should wiser be, than to pursue
 Each trifle that he sees.

But you have kill'd a tiny bird,
 Which flew not till to-day,
 Against my orders, whom you heard
 Forbidding you the prey. 8

Nor did you kill, that you might eat,
 And ease a doggish pain,
 For him, though chas'd with furious heat,
 You left where he was slain.

Nor was he of the thievish sort,
 Or one whom blood allures,
 But innocent was all his sport,
 Whom you have torn for yours. 16

My dog ! what remedy remains,
 Since, teach you all I can,
 I see you, after all my pains,
 So much resemble man !

BEAU'S REPLY

SIR ! when I flew to seize the bird,
 In spite of your command,
 A louder voice than yours I heard,
 And harder to withstand :
 You cried—Forbear !—but in my breast
 A mightier cried—Proceed !
 'Twas nature, Sir, whose strong behest
 Impell'd me to the deed. 8

Yet much as nature I respect,
 I ventured once to break
 (As you perhaps may recollect)
 Her precept, for your sake ;

And when your linnet, on a day,
 Passing his prison-door,
 Had flutter'd all his strength away,
 And panting press'd the floor, 16

Well knowing him a sacred thing,
 Not destin'd to my tooth,
 I only kiss'd his ruffled wing,
 And lick'd the feathers smooth.

Let my obedience then excuse
 My disobedience now,
 Nor some reproof yourself refuse
 From your aggriev'd Bow-wow ! 24

If killing birds be such a crime,
 (Which I can hardly see)
 What think you, Sir, of killing Time
 With verse address'd to me ?

TO MARY

Written 1793.—Published 1803

THE twentieth year is well-nigh past,
 Since first our sky was overcast ;
 Ah would that this might be the last !
 My Mary !

Thy spirits have a fainter flow,
 I see thee daily weaker grow—
 'Twas my distress that brought thee low,
 My Mary ! 8

Thy needles, once a shining store,
 For my sake restless heretofore,
 Now rust disus'd, and shine no more,
 My Mary !

For though thou gladly wouldst fulfil
 The same kind office for me still,
 Thy sight now seconds not thy will,
 My Mary ! 16

But well thou play'd'st the housewife's part,
 And all thy threads with magic art
 Have wound themselves about this heart,
 My Mary !

Thy indistinct expressions seem
 Like language utter'd in a dream ;
 Yet me they charm, whate'er the theme,
24
My Mary !

Thy silver locks, once auburn bright,
 Are still more lovely in my sight
 Than golden beams of orient light,
32
My Mary !

For could I view nor them nor thee,
 What sight worth seeing could I see ?
 The sun would rise in vain for me,
32
My Mary !

Partakers of thy sad decline,
 Thy hands their little force resign ;
 Yet, gently prest, press gently mine,
40
My Mary !

And then I feel that still I hold
 A richer store ten thousandfold
 Than misers fancy in their gold,
40
My Mary !

Such feebleness of limbs thou prov'st,
 That now at every step thou mov'st
 Upheld by two ; yet still thou lov'st,
48
My Mary !

And still to love, though prest with ill,
 In wintry age to feel no chill,
 With me is to be lovely still,
48
My Mary !

But ah ! by constant heed I know,
 How oft the sadness that I show
 Transforms thy smiles to looks of woe,
48
My Mary !

Written March 20, 1799.—Published 1803

OBSCUREST night involv'd the sky,
Th' Atlantic billows roar'd,
When such a destin'd wretch as I,
Wash'd headlong from on board,
Of friends, of hope, of all bereft,
His floating home for ever left.

No braver chief could Albion boast
 Than he with whom he went,
 Nor ever ship left Albion's coast,
 With warmer wishes sent.
 He lov'd them both, but both in vain,
 Nor him beheld, nor her again.

Not long beneath the whelming brine,
Expert to swim, he lay ;
Nor soon he felt his strength decline,
Or courage die away ;
But wag'd with death a lasting strife,
Supported by despair of life.

He shouted : nor his friends had fail'd
To check the vessel's course,
But so the furious blast prevail'd,
That, pitiless perforce,
They left their outcast mate behind,
And scudded still before the wind.

Some succour yet they could afford ;
 And, such as storms allow,
 The cask, the coop, the floated cord,
 Delay'd not to bestow.
 But he (they knew) nor ship, nor shore,
 Whate'er they gave, should visit more. 30

Nor, cruel as it seem'd, could he
 Their haste himself condemn,
 Aware that flight, in such a sea,
 Alone could rescue them ;
 Yet bitter felt it still to die
 Deserted, and his friends so nigh. 36

He long survives, who lives an hour
 In ocean, self-upheld ;
 And so long he, with unspent pow'r,
 His destiny repell'd ;
 And ever, as the minutes flew,
 Entreated help, or cried—Adieu ! 42

At length, his transient respite past,
 His comrades, who before
 Had heard his voice in ev'ry blast,
 Could catch the sound no more.
 For then, by toil subdued, he drank
 The stifling wave, and then he sank. 48

No poet wept him : but the page
 Of narrative sincere,
 That tells his name, his worth, his age,
 Is wet with Anson's tear.
 And tears by bards or heroes shed
 Alike immortalize the dead. 54

I therefore purpose not, or dream,
 Descanting on his fate,
 To give the melancholy theme
 A more enduring date :
 But misery still delights to trace
 Its 'semblance in another's case. 60

No voice divine the storm allay'd,
 No light propitious shone ;
 When, snatch'd from all effectual aid,
 We perish'd, each alone :
 But I beneath a rougher sea,
 And whelm'd in deeper gulphs than he. 66

SELECTIONS FROM COWPER'S LETTERS

TO JOSEPH HILL, ESQ.

Huntingdon, July 3, 1765.

Dear Joe—Whatever you may think of the matter, it is no such easy thing to keep house for two people. A man cannot always live upon sheep's heads, and liver and lights, like the lions in the Tower ; and a joint of meat, in so small a family, is an endless encumbrance. My butcher's bill for last week amounted to four shillings and tenpence. I set off with a leg of lamb, and was forced to give part of it away to my washerwoman. Then I made an experiment upon a sheep's heart, and that was too little. Next I put 10 three pounds of beef into a pie, and this had like to have been too much, for it lasted three days, though my landlord was admitted to a share in it. Then as to small beer, I am puzzled to pieces about it. I have bought as much for a shilling, as will serve us at least a month, and it is grown sour already. In short, I never knew how to pity poor housekeepers before ; but now I cease to wonder at that politic cast which their occupation usually gives to their countenance, for it is really a matter full of perplexity.

I have received but one visit since here I came. I don't 20 mean that I have refused any, but that only one has been offered. This was from my woollen-draper ; a very healthy, wealthy, sensible, sponisible man, and extremely civil. He has a cold bath, and has promised me a key of it, which I shall probably make use of in the winter. He has undertaken, too, to get me the St. James's Chronicle three times a-week, and to show me Hinchinbrook House, and to do every service for me in his power ; so that I did not exceed the truth, you see, when I spoke of his civility.

Here is a card-assembly, and a dancing-assembly, and a horse-race, and a club, and a bowling-green, so that I am well off, you perceive, in point of diversions ; especially as I shall go to 'em just as much as I should if I lived a thousand miles off. But no matter for that ; the spectator at a play is more entertained than the actor ; and in real life it is much the same. You will say, perhaps, that if I never frequent these places, I shall not come within the description of a spectator ; and you will say
 10 right. I have made a blunder, which shall be corrected in the next edition.

You are an old dog at a bad tenant ; witness all my uncle's and your mother's geese and gridirons. There is something so extremely impertinent in entering upon a man's premises, and using them without paying for 'em, that I could easily resent it if I would. But I rather choose to entertain myself with thinking how you will scour the man about, and worry him to death, if once you begin with him. Poor toad ! I leave him entirely to your
 20 mercy.

My dear Joe, you desire me to write long letters—I have neither matter enough, nor perseverance enough for the purpose. However, if you can but contrive to be tired of reading as soon as I am tired of writing, we shall find that short ones answer just as well ; and, in my opinion, this is a very practicable measure.

My friend Colman has had good fortune ; I wish him better fortune still ; which is, that he may make a right use of it. The tragedies of Lloyd and Bensley are both
 30 very deep. If they are not of use to the surviving part of society, it is their own fault.

I was debtor to Bensley seven pounds, or nine, I forget which. If you can find out his brother, you will do me a great favour, if you will pay him for me ; but do it at your leisure.—Yours and theirs, W. C.

TO LADY HESKETH

Huntingdon, Oct. 18, 1765.

I wish you joy, my dear Cousin, of being safely arrived in port from the storms of Southampton. For my own part, who am but as a Thames wherry, in a world full of tempest and commotion, I know so well the value of the creek I have put into, and the snugness it affords me, that I have a sensible sympathy with you in the pleasure you find in being once more blown to Droxford. I know enough of Miss Morley to send her my compliments; to which, if I had never seen her, her affection for you would ¹⁰ sufficiently entitle her. If I neglected to do it sooner, it is only because I am naturally apt to neglect what I ought to do; and if I was as genteel as I am negligent, I should be the most delightful creature in the universe.

I am glad you think so favourably of my Huntingdon acquaintance; they are indeed a nice set of folks, and suit me exactly. I should have been more particular in my account of Miss Unwin if I had had materials for a minute description. She is about eighteen years of age, rather handsome and genteel. In her mother's company ²⁰ she says little; not because her mother requires it of her, but because she seems glad of that excuse for not talking, being somewhat inclined to bashfulness. There is the most remarkable cordiality between all the parts of the family; and the mother and daughter seem to dote upon each other. The first time I went to the house I was introduced to the daughter alone; and sat with her near half an hour, before her brother came in, who had appointed me to call upon him. Talking is necessary in a *tête-à-tête*, to distinguish the persons of the drama from the chairs they ³⁰ sit on: accordingly she talked a great deal, and extremely well; and, like the rest of the family, behaved with as much ease of address as if we had been old acquaintance.

She resembles her mother in her great piety, who is one of the most remarkable instances of it I have ever seen. They are altogether the cheerfulest and most engaging family-piece it is possible to conceive.

Since I wrote the above, I met Mrs. Unwin in the street, and went home with her. She and I walked together near two hours in the garden, and had a conversation which did me more good than I should have received from an audience of the first prince in Europe. That woman is a blessing to
10 me, and I never see her without being the better for her company. I am treated in the family as if I was a near relation, and have been repeatedly invited to call upon them at all times. You know what a shy fellow I am ; I cannot prevail with myself to make so much use of this privilege as I am sure they intend I should ; but perhaps this awkwardness will wear off hereafter. It was my earnest request before I left St. Albans, that wherever it might please Providence to dispose of me, I might meet with such an acquaintance as I find in Mrs. Unwin. How
20 happy it is to believe, with a steadfast assurance, that our petitions are heard even while we are making them ; and how delightful to meet with a proof of it in the effectual and actual grant of them ! . . . My love to all who inquire after me.—Yours affectionately, W. C.

TO THE REV. WILLIAM UNWIN

You, I think, was never a dabbler in rhyme. I have been one ever since I was fourteen years of age, when I began with translating an elegy of Tibullus. I have no more right to the name of a poet, than a maker of mouse-traps has to that of an engineer ; but my little
30 exploits in this way have at times amused me so much, that I have often wished myself a good one. Such a talent in verse as mine is like a child's rattle,—very entertaining

to the trifle that uses it, and very disagreeable to all beside. But it has served to rid me of some melancholy moments, for I only take it up as a gentleman performer does his fiddle. I have this peculiarity belonging to me as a rhymist, that though I am charmed to a great degree with my own work, while it is on the anvil, I can seldom bear to look at it when it is once finished. The more I contemplate it, the more it loses of its value, till I am at last quite disgusted with it. I then throw it by, take it up again perhaps ten years after, and am as much delighted 10 with it as at first.

Few people have the art of being agreeable when they talk of themselves; if you are not weary therefore by this time you pay me a high compliment.

I dare say Miss S—— was much diverted with the conjecture of her friends. The true key to the pleasure she found at Olney was plain enough to be seen, but they chose to overlook it. She brought with her a disposition to be pleased, which whoever does is sure to find a visit agreeable, because they make it so.—Yours, W. C. 20

TO THE REV. WILLIAM UNWIN

July 17, 1779.

My dear Friend—We envy you your sea-breezes. In the garden we feel nothing but the reflection of the heat from the walls; and in the parlour, from the opposite houses. I fancy Virgil was so situated when he wrote those two beautiful lines:

—*Oh quis me gelidis in vallibus Haemi
Sistat, et ingenti ramorum protegat umbra!*

The worst of it is, that though the sunbeams strike as forcibly upon my harp-strings as they did upon his, they 30 elicit no such sounds, but rather produce such groans as they are said to have drawn from those of the statue of Memnon.

As you have ventured to make the experiment, your own experience will be your best guide in the article of bathing. An inference will hardly follow, though one should pull at it with all one's might, from Smollett's case to yours. He was corpulent, muscular, and strong; whereas, if you were either stolen or strayed, such a description of you in an advertisement would hardly direct an inquirer with sufficient accuracy and exactness. But if bathing does not make your head ache, or prevent your
10 sleeping at night, I should imagine it could not hurt you.

I remember taking a walk upon the strand at Margate, where the cliff is high and perpendicular. At long intervals there are cart-ways, cut through the rock down to the beach, and there is no other way of access to it, or of return from it. I walked near a mile upon the water edge, without observing that the tide was rising fast upon me. When I *did* observe it, it was almost too late. I ran every step back again, and had much ado to save my distance. I mention this as a caution, lest you should happen at any
20 time to be surprised as I was. It would be very unpleasant to be forced to cling, like a cat, to the side of a precipice, and perhaps hardly possible to do it, for four hours without any respite.

It seems a trifle, but it is a real disadvantage to have no better name to pass by than the gentleman you mention. Whether we suppose him settled and promoted in the army, the church, or the law, how uncouth the sound—Captain Twopenny! Bishop Twopenny! Judge Twopenny! The abilities of Lord Mansfield would hardly impart a dignity
30 to such a name. Should he perform deeds worthy of poetical panegyric, how difficult would it be to ennoble the sound of Twopenny!

Muse! place him high upon the lists of Fame,
The wonderous man, and Twopenny his name!

But to be serious, if the French should land in the Isle or

Thanet, and Mr. Twopenny should fall into their hands, he will have a fair opportunity to frenchify his name, and may call himself Monsieur Deux Sous; which, when he comes to be exchanged by Cartel, will easily resume an English form, and slide naturally into Two Shoes, in my mind a considerable improvement.—Yours affectionately,
W. C.

TO THE REV. WILLIAM UNWIN

Oct. 31, 1779.

My dear Friend—I wrote my last letter merely to inform you that I had nothing to say; in answer to which you¹⁰ have said nothing. I admire the propriety of your conduct though I am a loser by it. I will endeavour to say something now, and shall hope for something in return.

I have been well entertained with Johnson's biographies, for which I thank you: with one exception, and that a swingeing one, I think he has acquitted himself with his usual good sense and sufficiency. His treatment of Milton is unmerciful to the last degree. A pensioner is not likely to spare a republican; and the Doctor, in order, I suppose, to convince his royal patron of the sincerity of his²⁰ monarchical principles, has belaboured that great poet's character with the most industrious cruelty. As a man, he has hardly left him the shadow of one good quality. Churlishness in his private life, and a rancorous hatred of everything royal in his public, are the two colours with which he has smeared all the canvas. If he had any virtues, they are not to be found in the Doctor's picture of him; and it is well for Milton, that some sourness in his temper is the only vice with which his memory has been charged; it is evident enough that if his biographer could³⁰ have discovered more, he would not have spared him. As a poet, he has treated him with severity enough, and has plucked one or two of the most beautiful feathers out

of his Muse's wing, and trampled them under his great foot. He has passed sentence of condemnation upon Lycidas, and has taken occasion, from that charming poem, to expose to ridicule (what is indeed ridiculous enough), the childish prattlement of pastoral compositions, as if Lycidas was the prototype and pattern of them all. The liveliness of the description, the sweetness of the numbers, the classical spirit of antiquity that prevails in it, go for nothing. I am convinced, by the way, that he has no ear
 10 for poetical numbers, or that it was stopped by prejudice against the harmony of Milton's. Was there ever anything so delightful as the music of the *Paradise Lost*? It is like that of a fine organ; has the fullest and the deepest tones of majesty, with all the softness and elegance of the Dorian flute. Variety without end and never equalled, unless perhaps by Virgil. Yet the Doctor has little or nothing to say upon this copious theme, but talks something about the unfitness of the English language for blank verse, and how apt it is, in the mouth of some readers, to
 20 degenerate into declamation. Oh! I could thresh his old jacket, till I made his pension jingle in his pocket.

I could talk a good while longer, but I have no room; our love attends you.—Yours affectionately, W. C.

TO THE REV. JOHN NEWTON

May 3, 1780.

I draw mountains, valleys, woods, and streams, and ducks, and dab-chicks. I admire them myself, and Mrs. Unwin admires them; and her praise, and my praise put together, are fame enough for me. Oh! I could spend whole days and moonlight nights in feeding upon a lovely
 30 prospect! My eyes drink the rivers as they flow. If every human being upon earth could think for one quarter of an hour as I have done for many years, there might perhaps be

many miserable men among them, but not an unawakened one could be found from the arctic to the antarctic circle. At present, the difference between them and me is greatly to their advantage. I delight in baubles, and know them to be so ; for rested in, and viewed without a reference to their Author, what is the earth,—what are the planets,—what is the sun itself but a bauble ? Better for a man never to have seen them, or to see them with the eyes of a brute, stupid and unconscious of what he beholds, than not to be able to say, ‘ The Maker of all these wonders is ¹⁰ my friend ! ’ Their eyes have never been opened to see that they are trifles ; mine have been, and will be till they are closed for ever. They think a fine estate, a large conservatory, a hothouse rich as a West Indian garden, things of consequence ; visit them with pleasure, and muse upon them with ten times more. I am pleased with a frame of four lights, doubtful whether the few pines it contains will ever be worth a farthing ; amuse myself with a greenhouse which Lord Bute’s gardener could take upon his back, and walk away with ; and when I have paid it the ²⁰ accustomed visit, and watered it, and given it air, I say to myself—‘ This is not mine, it is a plaything lent me for the present ; I must leave it soon.’ W. C.

TO MRS. NEWTON

June, 1780.

You have never yet perhaps been made acquainted with the unfortunate Tom Freeman’s misadventure. He and his wife returning from Hanslip fair, were coming down Weston Lane ; to wit, themselves, their horse, and their great wooden panniers, at ten o’clock at night. The horse having a lively imagination, and very weak nerves, fancied ³⁰ he either saw or heard something, but has never been able to say what. A sudden fright will impart activity, and

a momentary vigour, even to lameness itself. Accordingly, he started, and sprung from the middle of the road to the side of it, with such surprising alacrity, that he dismounted the gingerbread baker and his gingerbread wife in a moment. Not contented with this effort, nor thinking himself yet out of danger, he proceeded as fast as he could to a full gallop, rushed against the gate at the bottom of the lane, and opened it for himself, without perceiving that there was any gate there. Still he galloped, and with
10 a velocity and momentum continually increasing, till he arrived in Olney. I had been in bed about ten minutes, when I heard the most uncommon and unaccountable noise that can be imagined. It was, in fact, occasioned by the clattering of tin patty-pans and a Dutch-oven against the sides of the panniers. Much gingerbread was picked up in the street, and Mr. Lucy's windows were broken all to pieces. Had this been all, it would have been a comedy, but we learned the next morning, that the poor woman's collar-bone was broken, and she has hardly been able to
20 resume her occupation since. . . . WM. COWPER.

TO THE REV. WILLIAM UNWIN

June 8, 1780.

My dear Friend—It is possible I might have indulged myself in the pleasure of writing to you, without waiting for a letter from you, but for a reason which you will not easily guess. Your mother communicated to me the satisfaction you expressed in my correspondence, that you thought me entertaining and clever, and so forth:—now you must know, I love praise dearly, especially from the judicious, and those who have so much delicacy them-
30 selves as not to offend mine in giving it. But then, I found this consequence attending, or likely to attend, the eulogium you bestowed;—if my friend thought me witty

before, he shall think me ten times more witty hereafter ;
 —where I joked once, I will joke five times, and for one
 sensible remark I will send him a dozen. Now this foolish
 vanity would have spoiled me quite, and would have made
 me as disgusting a letter-writer as Pope, who seems to
 have thought that unless a sentence was well turned,
 and every period pointed with some conceit, it was not
 worth the carriage. Accordingly he is to me, except in
 very few instances, the most disagreeable maker of epistles
 that ever I met with. I was willing, therefore, to wait 10
 till the impression your commendation had made upon the
 foolish part of me was worn off, that I might scribble
 away as usual, and write my uppermost thoughts, and
 those only. . . .

*An English Versification of a Thought that popped into my
 Head about two Months since.*

Sweet stream ! that winds through yonder glade—
 Apt emblem of a virtuous maid !—
 Silent, and chaste, she steals along,
 Far from the world's gay, busy throng ; 20
 With gentle, yet prevailing force,
 Intent upon her destin'd course :
 Graceful, and useful, all she does,
 Blessing, and bless'd, where'er she goes :
 Pure-bosom'd, as that watery glass,
 And Heaven reflected in her face !

Now this is not so exclusively applicable to a maiden,
 as to be the sole property of your sister Shuttleworth. If
 you look at Mrs. Unwin, you will see that she has not lost
 her right to this just praise by marrying you. 30

Your mother sends her love to all, and mine comes
 jogging along by the side of it.—Yours, W. C.

TO THE REV. WILLIAM UNWIN

May 23, 1781.

My dear Friend— . . . If a writer's friends have need of patience, how much more the writer ! Your desire to see my muse in public, and mine to gratify you, must both suffer the mortification of delay. I expected that my trumpeter would have informed the world by this time of all that is needful for them to know upon such an occasion ; and that an advertising blast, blown through every newspaper, would have said—'The poet is coming !'—But
 10 man, especially man that writes verse, is born to disappointments, as surely as printers and booksellers are born to be the most dilatory and tedious of all creatures. The plain English of this magnificent preamble is, that the season of publication is just elapsed, that the town is going into the country every day, and that my book cannot appear till they return, that is to say, not till next winter. . . .

My neckcloths being all worn out, I intend to wear stocks, but not unless they are more fashionable than the former. In that case, I shall be obliged to you if you will
 20 buy me a handsome stock-buckle, for a very little money ; for twenty or twenty-five shillings perhaps a second-hand affair may be purchased that will make a figure at Olney.

I am much obliged to you for your offer to support me in a translation of Bourne. It is but seldom, however, and never except for my amusement, that I translate, because I find it disagreeable to work by another man's pattern ; I should at least be sure to find it so in a business of any
 30 length. Again, *that* is epigrammatic and witty in Latin, which would be perfectly insipid in English ; and a translator of Bourne would frequently find himself obliged to supply what is called the turn, which is in fact the most difficult, and the most expensive part of the whole composi-

tion, and could not perhaps, in many instances, be done with any tolerable success. If a Latin poem is neat, elegant, and musical, it is enough ; but English readers are not so easily satisfied. To quote myself, you will find, in comparing the Jackdaw with the original, that I was obliged to sharpen a point which, though smart enough in the Latin, would, in English, have appeared as plain, and as blunt, as the tag of a lace. I love the memory of Vinny Bourne. I think him a better Latin poet than Tibullus, Propertius, Ausonius, or any of the writers in *his* way, except Ovid, and not at all inferior to *him*. I love him too with a love of partiality, because he was usher of the fifth form at Westminster, when I passed through it. He was so good-natured, and so indolent, that I lost more than I got by him ; for he made me as idle as himself. He was such a sloven, as if he had trusted to his genius as a cloak for everything that could disgust you in his person ; and indeed in his writings he has almost made amends for all. His humour is entirely original ; he can speak of a magpie or a cat in terms so exquisitely appropriated to the character he draws, that one would suppose him animated by the spirit of the creature he describes. And with all this drollery there is a mixture of rational, and even religious, reflection at times : and always an air of pleasantry, good-nature, and humanity, that makes him, in my mind, one of the most amiable writers in the world. It is not common to meet with an author who can make you smile, and yet at nobody's expense ; who is always entertaining, and yet always harmless ; and who, though always elegant, and classical to a degree not always found even in the classics themselves, charms more by the simplicity and playfulness of his ideas, than by the neatness and purity of his verse ; yet such was poor Vinny. I remember seeing the Duke of Richmond set fire to his greasy locks, and box his ears to put it out again. . . .—
Yours affectionately, W. C.

TO THE REV. WILLIAM UNWIN

July 29, 1781.

My dear Friend—Having given the case you laid before me in your last all due consideration, I proceed to answer it ; and in order to clear my way, shall, in the first place, set down my sense of those passages in Scripture which, on a hasty perusal, seem to clash with the opinion I am going to give—‘ If a man smite one cheek, turn the other ’—‘ If he take thy cloak, let him take thy coat also.’ That is, I suppose, rather than on a vindictive principle avail yourself of that remedy the law allows you, in the way of retaliation, for that was the subject immediately under the discussion of the speaker. Nothing is so contrary to the genius of the Gospel, as the gratification of resentment and revenge, but I cannot easily persuade myself to think, that the author of that dispensation could possibly advise his followers to consult their own peace at the expense of the peace of society, or inculcate a universal abstinence from the use of lawful remedies, to the encouragement of injury and oppression.

20 St. Paul again seems to condemn the practice of going to law, ‘ Why do ye not rather suffer wrong,’ &c. But if we look again, we shall find that a litigious temper had obtained, and was prevalent among the professors of the day. This he condemned, and with good reason ; it was unseemly to the last degree, that the disciples of the Prince of Peace should worry and vex each other with injurious treatment, and unnecessary disputes, to the scandal of their religion in the eyes of the heathen. But surely he did not mean any more than his Master, in the place above alluded to, that
30 the most harmless members of society should receive no advantage of its laws, or should be the only persons in the world who should derive no benefit from those institutions, without which society cannot subsist. Neither of them

could mean to throw down the pale of property, and to lay the Christian part of the world open, throughout all ages, to the incursions of unlimited violence and wrong.

By this time you are sufficiently aware, that I think you have an indisputable right to recover at law what is so dishonestly withheld from you. The fellow, I suppose, has discernment enough to see a difference between you and the generality of the clergy, and cunning enough to conceive the purpose of turning your meekness and forbearance to good account, and of coining them into hard cash, which 10 he means to put in his pocket. But I would disappoint him, and show him, that though a Christian is not to be quarrelsome, he is not to be crushed ; and that though he is but a worm before God, he is not such a worm as every selfish unprincipled wretch may tread upon at his pleasure.

I lately heard a story from a lady, who has spent many years of her life in France, somewhat to the present purpose. An Abbé, universally esteemed for his piety, and especially for the meekness of his manners, had yet undesignedly given some offence to a shabby fellow in his parish. The 20 man, concluding he might do as he pleased with so forgiving and gentle a character, struck him on one cheek, and bade him turn the other. The good man did so, and when he had received the two slaps, which he thought himself obliged to submit to, turned again, and beat him soundly. I do not wish to see you follow the French gentleman's example, but I believe nobody that has heard the story condemns him much for the spirit he showed upon the occasion.

I had the relation from Lady Austen, sister to Mrs. Jones, 30 wife of the minister of Clifton. She is a most agreeable woman, and has fallen in love with your mother and me ; insomuch, that I do not know but she may settle at Olney. Yesterday se'nnight we all dined together in the *Spinney*—a most delightful retirement, belonging to Mrs. Throck-

morton of Weston. Lady Austen's lackey, and a lad that waits on me in the garden, drove a wheelbarrow full of eatables and drinkables to the scene of our *Fête Champêtre*. A board laid over the top of the wheelbarrow served us for a table; our dining-room was a root-house lined with moss and ivy. At six o'clock, the servants, who had dined under a great elm tree upon the ground, at a little distance, boiled the kettle, and the said wheelbarrow served us for a tea-table. We then took a walk into the wilderness, about
 10 half a mile off, and were at home again a little after eight, having spent the day together from noon till evening without one cross occurrence, or the least weariness of each other: a happiness few parties of pleasure can boast of.—Yours,
 with our joint love, W. C.

TO THE REV. JOHN NEWTON

The Greenhouse, Sept. 18, 1781.

My dear Friend— . . . I have no objection in the world to your conveying a copy to Dr. Johnson; though I well know that one of his pointed sarcasms, if he should happen to be displeased, would soon find its ways into all companies, and
 20 spoil the sale. He writes, indeed, like a man that thinks a great deal, and that sometimes thinks religiously: but report informs me that he has been severe enough in his animadversions upon Dr. Watts, who was nevertheless, if I am in any degree a judge of verse, a man of true poetical ability; careless, indeed, for the most part, and inattentive too often to those niceties which constitute elegance of expression, but frequently sublime in his conceptions, and masterly in his execution. Pope, I have heard, had placed him once in the *Dunciad*; but on being advised to read
 30 before he judged him, was convinced that he deserved other treatment, and thrust somebody's blockhead into the gap, whose name, consisting of a monosyllable, happened to fit

it. Whatever faults, however, I may be chargeable with as a poet, I cannot accuse myself of negligence. I never suffer a line to pass till I have made it as good as I can ; and though my doctrines may offend this king of critics, he will not, I flatter myself, be disgusted by slovenly inaccuracy, either in the numbers, rhymes, or language. Let the rest take its chance. It is possible he may be pleased ; and if he should, I shall have engaged on my side one of the best trumpeters in the kingdom. Let him only speak as favourably of me as he has spoken of Sir Richard Blackmore (who, though he shines in his poem called *Creation*, has written more absurdities in verse than any writer of our country), and my success will be secured.

I have often promised myself a laugh with you about your pipe, but have always forgotten it when I have been writing, and at present I am not much in a laughing humour. You will observe, however, for your comfort and the honour of that same pipe, that it hardly falls within the line of my censure. You never fumigate the ladies, or force them out of company ; nor do you use it as an incentive to hard drinking. Your friends, indeed, have reason to complain that it frequently deprives them of the pleasure of your own conversation while it leads you either into your study or your garden ; but in all other respects it is as innocent a pipe as can be. Smoke away, therefore ; and remember that if one poet has condemned the practice, a better than he (the witty and elegant Hawkins Browne) has been warm in the praise of it.

TO THE REV. WILLIAM UNWIN

October 6, 1781.

My dear Friend—What a world are you daily conversant with, which I have not seen these twenty years, and shall never see again ! The arts of dissipation (I suppose) are

nowhere practised with more refinement or success than at the place of your present residence. By your account of it, it seems to be just what it was when I visited it, a scene of idleness and luxury, music, dancing, cards, walking, riding, bathing, eating, drinking, coffee, tea, scandal, dressing, yawning, sleeping; the rooms perhaps more magnificent, because the proprietors are grown richer, but the manners and occupations of the company just the same. Though my life has long been like that of a recluse, I have not the
10 temper of one, nor am I in the least an enemy to cheerfulness and good humour; but I cannot envy you your situation; I even feel myself constrained to prefer the silence of this nook, and the snug fireside in our own diminutive parlour, to all the splendour and gaiety of Brighton.

You ask me, how I feel on the occasion of my approaching publication. Perfectly at my ease. If I had not been pretty well assured beforehand that my tranquillity would be but little endangered by such a measure, I would never have engaged in it; for I cannot bear disturbance. I have had
20 in view two principal objects; first, to amuse myself,—and secondly, to compass that point in such a manner, that others might possibly be the better for my amusement. If I have succeeded, it will give me pleasure; but if I have failed, I shall not be mortified to the degree that might perhaps be expected. I remember an old adage (though not where it is to be found), '*bene vixit, qui bene latuit*,' and if I had recollected it at the right time, it should have been the motto to my book. By the way, it will make an excellent
30 one for *Retirement*, if you can but tell me whom to quote for it. The critics cannot deprive me of the pleasure I have in reflecting, that so far as my leisure has been employed in writing for the public, it has been conscientiously employed, and with a view to their advantage. There is nothing agreeable, to be sure, in being chronicled for a dunce; but I believe there lives not a man upon earth who would be less

affected by it than myself. With all this indifference to fame, which you know me too well to suppose me capable of affecting, I have taken the utmost pains to deserve it. This may appear a mystery or a paradox in practice, but it is true. I considered that the taste of the day is refined, and delicate to excess, and that to disgust the delicacy of taste, by a slovenly inattention to it, would be to forfeit at once all hope of being useful ; and for this reason, though I have written more verse this last year than perhaps any man in England, I have finished, and polished, and touched, 10 and retouched, with the utmost care. If after all I should be converted into waste paper, it may be my misfortune, but it will not be my fault. I shall bear it with the most perfect serenity.

I do not mean to give Quarme a copy : he is a good-natured little man, and crows exactly like a cock, but knows no more of verse than the cock he imitates.

Whoever supposes that Lady Austen's fortune is precarious, is mistaken. I can assure you, upon the ground of the most circumstantial and authentic information, that 20 it is both genteel and perfectly safe.—Yours, W. C.

TO THE REV. WILLIAM UNWIN

Jan. 5, 1782.

In the last Review, I mean in the last but one, I saw Johnson's critique upon Prior and Pope. I am bound to acquiesce in his opinion of the latter, because it has always been my own. I could never agree with those who preferred him to Dryden ; nor with others (I have known such, and persons of taste and discernment too), who could not allow him to be a poet at all. He was certainly a mechanical maker of verses, and in every line he ever wrote, 30 we see indubitable marks of the most indefatigable industry and labour. Writers who find it necessary to make such

strenuous and painful exertions, are generally as phlegmatic as they are correct ; but Pope was, in this respect, exempted from the common lot of authors of that class. With the unwearied application of a plodding Flemish painter, who draws a shrimp with the most minute exactness, he had all the genius of one of the first masters. Never, I believe, were such talents and such drudgery united. But I admire Dryden most, who has succeeded by mere dint of genius, and in spite of a laziness and carelessness almost peculiar
10 to himself. His faults are numberless, but so are his beauties. His faults are those of a great man, and his beauties are such (at least sometimes) as Pope with all his touching and retouching could never equal. So far, therefore, I have no quarrel with Johnson. But I cannot subscribe to what he says of Prior. In the first place, though my memory may fail me, I do not recollect that he takes any notice of his Solomon ; in my mind the best poem, whether we consider the subject of it, or the execution, that he ever wrote. In the next place, he condemns him for introducing Venus and
20 Cupid into his love-verses, and concludes it impossible his passion could be sincere, because when he would express it he has recourse to fables. But when Prior wrote, those deities were not so obsolete as now. His contemporary writers, and some that succeeded him, did not think them beneath their notice. Tibullus, in reality, disbelieved their existence as much as we do ; yet Tibullus is allowed to be the prince of all poetical inamoratos, though he mentions them in almost every page. There is a fashion in these things which the Doctor seems to have forgotten. But
30 what shall we say of his old fusty-rusty remarks upon Henry and Emma ? I agree with him, that morally considered both the knight and his lady are bad characters, and that each exhibits an example which ought not to be followed. The man dissembles in a way that would have justified the woman had she renounced him ; and the

woman resolves to follow him at the expense of delicacy, propriety, and even modesty itself. But when the critic calls it a dull dialogue, who but a critic will believe him? There are few readers of poetry of either sex, in this country, who cannot remember how that enchanting piece has bewitched them, who do not know, that instead of finding it tedious, they have been so delighted with the romantic turn of it, as to have overlooked all its defects, and to have given it a consecrated place in their memories, without ever feeling it a burthen. I wonder almost that, as the Bacchanals ¹⁰ served Orpheus, the boys and girls do not tear this husky, dry commentator limb from limb, in resentment of such an injury done to their darling poet. I admire Johnson as a man of great erudition and sense; but when he sets himself up for a judge of writers upon the subject of love, a passion which I suppose he never felt in his life, he might as well think himself qualified to pronounce upon a treatise on horsemanship, or the art of fortification. . . .

—Yours,

W. C.

TO THE REV. WILLIAM UNWIN

Feb. 24, 1782. ²⁰

My dear Friend— . . . Having imparted to you an account of the fracas between us and Lady Austen, it is necessary that you should be made acquainted with every event that bears any relation to that incident. The day before yesterday she sent me, by her brother-in-law, Mr. Jones, three pair of worked ruffles, with advice that I should soon receive a fourth. I knew they were begun before we quarrelled. I begged Mr. Jones to tell her when he wrote next, how much I thought myself obliged, and gave him to understand that I should make ³⁰ her a very inadequate, though the only return in my power, by laying my volume at her feet. This likewise she had

previous reason given to expect. Thus stands the affair at present ; whether anything in the shape of a reconciliation is to take place hereafter, I know not ; but this I know, that when an amicable freedom of intercourse, and that unreserved confidence which belongs only to true friendship, has been once unrooted, plant it again with what care you may, it is very difficult, if not impossible, to make it grow. The fear of giving offence to a temper too apt to take it, is unfavourable to that comfort we propose to
10 ourselves even in our ordinary connexions, but absolutely incompatible with the pleasures of real friendship. She is to spend the summer in our neighbourhood, Lady Peterborough and Miss Mordaunt are to be of the party ; the former a dissipated woman of fashion, and the latter a haughty beauty. Retirement is our passion and our delight ; it is in still life alone we look for that measure of happiness we can rationally expect below. What have we to do therefore with characters like these ? shall we go to the dancing school again ? shall we cast off the simplicity
20 of our plain and artless demeanour, to learn, and not in a youthful day neither, the manners of those whose manners at the best are their only recommendation, and yet can in reality recommend them to none, but to people like themselves ? This would be folly which nothing but necessity could excuse, and in our case no such necessity can possibly obtain. We will not go into the world, and if the world would come to us, we must give it the French answer—*Monsieur et Madame ne sont pas visibles*. . . .—
Yours, W. C.

TO THE REV. WILLIAM UNWIN

30

June 12, 1782.

My dear Friend—Every extraordinary occurrence in our lives affords us an opportunity to learn, if we will, something more of our own hearts and tempers than we

were before aware of. It is easy to promise ourselves beforehand, that our conduct shall be wise, or moderate, or resolute, on any given occasion. But when that occasion occurs, we do not always find it easy to make good the promise: such a difference there is between theory and practice. Perhaps this is no new remark; but it is not a whit the worse for being old, if it be true.

Before I had published, I said to myself—You and I, Mr. Cowper, will not concern ourselves much about what the critics may say of our book. But having once ¹⁰ sent my wits for a venture, I soon became anxious about the issue, and found that I could not be satisfied with a warm place in my own good graces, unless my friends were pleased with me as much as I pleased myself. Meeting with their approbation, I began to feel the workings of ambition. It is well, said I, that my friends are pleased, but friends are sometimes partial, and mine, I have reason to think, are not altogether free from bias: methinks I should like to hear a stranger or two speak well of me. I was presently gratified by the approbation of the *London* ²⁰ *Magazine*, and the *Gentleman's*, particularly by that of the former, and by the plaudit of Dr. Franklin. By the way, magazines are publications we have but little respect for, till we ourselves are chronicled in them, and then they assume an importance in our esteem which before we could not allow them. But the *Monthly Review*, the most formidable of all my judges, is still behind. What will that critical Rhadamanthus say, when my shivering genius shall appear before him? Still he keeps me in hot water, and I must wait another month for his award. Alas! ³⁰ when I wish for a favourable sentence from that quarter (to confess a weakness that I should not confess to all), I feel myself not a little influenced by a tender regard to my reputation here, even among my neighbours at Olney. Here are watchmakers, who themselves are wits, and who

at present perhaps think me one. Here is a carpenter, and a baker, and not to mention others, here is your idol Mr. Teedon, whose smile is fame. All these read the *Monthly Review*, and all these will set me down for a dunce, if those terrible critics show them the example. But oh! wherever else I am accounted dull, dear Mr. Griffith, let me pass for a genius at Olney! . . .—Yours, W. C.

TO THE REV. WILLIAM UNWIN

Aug. 3, 1782.

My dear Friend— . . . It is a sort of paradox, but it is
10 true: we are never more in danger than when we think
ourselves most secure, nor in reality more secure than
when we seem to be most in danger. Both sides of this
apparent contradiction were lately verified in my experi-
ence.—Passing from the greenhouse to the barn, I saw
three kittens (for we have so many in our retinue) looking
with fixed attention at something, which lay on the
threshold of a door, coiled up. I took but little notice of
them at first; but a loud hiss engaged me to attend more
closely, when behold—a viper! the largest I remember
20 to have seen, rearing itself, darting its forked tongue, and
ejaculating the afore-mentioned hiss at the nose of a kitten
almost in contact with his lips. I ran into the hall for
a hoe with a long handle, with which I intended to assail
him, and returning in a few seconds missed him: he was
gone, and I feared had escaped me. Still however the
kitten sat watching immoveably upon the same spot.
I concluded, therefore, that, sliding between the door and
the threshold, he had found his way out of the garden into
the yard. I went round immediately, and there found him,
30 in close conversation with the old cat, whose curiosity
being excited by so novel an appearance, inclined her to
pat his head repeatedly with her fore foot; with her claws

however sheathed, and not in anger ; but in the way of philosophical inquiry and examination. To prevent her falling a victim to so laudable an exercise of her talents, I interposed in a moment with the hoe, and performed upon him an act of decapitation, which though not immediately mortal, proved so in the end. Had he slid into the passages, where it is dark, or had he, when in the yard, met with no interruption from the cat, and secreted himself in any of the outhouses, it is hardly possible but that some of the family must have been bitten ; he might have been trodden 10 upon without being perceived, and have slipped away before the sufferer could have well distinguished what foe had wounded him. Three years ago we discovered one in the same place, which the barber slew with a trowel.

TO THE REV. WILLIAM UNWIN

Nov. 18, 1782

My dear William— . . . I little thought when I was writing the history of John Gilpin, that he would appear in print—I intended to laugh, and to make two or three others laugh, of whom you were one. But now all the world laughs, at least if they have the same relish for a tale 20 ridiculous in itself, and quaintly told, as we have.—Well—they do not always laugh so innocently, or at so small an expense—for in a world like this, abounding with subjects for satire, and with satirical wits to mark them, a laugh that hurts nobody has at least the grace of novelty to recommend it. Swift's darling motto was, *Vive la bagatelle*—a good wish for a philosopher of his complexion, the greater part of whose wisdom, whencesoever it came, most certainly came not from above. *La bagatelle* has no enemy in me, though it has neither so warm a friend, nor so able a one, as it had in him. If I trifle, and merely trifle, it is 30 because I am reduced to it by necessity—a melancholy,

that nothing else so effectually disperses, engages me sometimes in the arduous task of being merry by force. And, strange as it may seem, the most ludicrous lines I ever wrote have been written in the saddest mood, and, but for that saddest mood, perhaps had never been written at all. To say truth, it would be but a shocking vagary, should the mariners on board a ship buffeted by a terrible storm, employ themselves in fiddling and dancing; yet sometimes much such a part act I. . . .—Yours, my dear
 10 William, W. C.

TO JOSEPH HILL, ESQ.

Dec. 7, 1782.

My dear Friend—At seven o'clock this evening, being the seventh of December, I imagine I see you in your box at the coffee-house. No doubt the waiter, as ingenious and adroit as his predecessors were before him, raises the teapot to the ceiling with his right hand, while in his left the teacup descending almost to the floor, receives a limpid stream; limpid in its descent, but no sooner has it reached its destination, than frothing and foaming to the view, it
 20 becomes a roaring sillabub. This is the nineteenth winter since I saw you in this situation; and if nineteen more pass over me before I die, I shall still remember a circumstance we have often laughed at.

How different is the complexion of your evenings and mine!—yours, spent amid the ceaseless hum that proceeds from the inside of fifty noisy and busy periwigs; mine, by a domestic fireside, in a retreat as silent as retirement can make it; where no noise is made but what we make for our own amusement. For instance here are two rustics,
 30 and your humble servant in company. One of the ladies has been playing on the harpsichord, while I, with the other, have been playing at battledore and shuttlecock. A little dog, in the meantime, howling under the chair of

the former, performed, in the vocal way, to admiration. This entertainment over, I began my letter, and having nothing more important to communicate, have given you an account of it. I know you love dearly to be idle, when you can find an opportunity to be so ; but as such opportunities are rare with you, I thought it possible that a short description of the idleness I enjoy might give you pleasure. The happiness we cannot call our own, we yet seem to possess, while we sympathize with our friends who can.

10

The papers tell me that peace is at hand, and that it is at a great distance ; that the siege of Gibraltar is abandoned, and that it is to be still continued. It is happy for me, that though I love my country, I have but little curiosity. There was a time when these contradictions would have distressed me, but I have learnt by experience that it is best for little people like myself to be patient, and to wait till time affords the intelligence which no speculations of theirs can ever furnish.

WM. COWPER.

TO JOSEPH HILL, ESQ.

Nov. 11, 1782. 20

My dear Friend— . . . I am glad your health is such, that you have nothing more to complain of than may be expected on the downhill side of life. If mine is better than yours, it is to be attributed, I suppose, principally, to the constant enjoyment of country air and retirement ; the most perfect regularity in matters of eating, drinking, and sleeping ; and a happy emancipation from everything that wears the face of business. I lead the life I always wished for, and the single circumstance of dependence excepted (which, between ourselves, is very contrary to my predominant 30 humour and disposition), have no want left broad enough for another wish to stand upon. . . . Yours affectionately,

WM. COWPER.

TO THE REV. JOHN NEWTON

Jan. 26, 1783.

My dear Friend—It is reported among persons of the best intelligence at Olney—the barber, the schoolmaster, and the drummer of a corps quartered at this place—that the belligerent powers are at last reconciled, the articles of the treaty adjusted, and that peace is at the door. I saw this morning, at nine o'clock, a group of about twelve figures very closely engaged in a conference, as I suppose, upon the same subject. The scene of consultation was
10 a blacksmith's shed, very comfortably screened from the wind, and directly opposed to the morning sun. Some held their hands behind them, some had them folded across their bosom, and others had thrust them into their breeches pockets. Every man's posture bespoke a pacific turn of mind ; but the distance being too great for their words to reach me, nothing transpired. I am willing, however, to hope that the secret will not be a secret long, and that you and I, equally interested in the event, though not, perhaps, equally well-informed, shall soon have an oppor-
20 tunity to rejoice in the completion of it. The powers of Europe have clashed with each other to a fine purpose ; that the Americans, at length declared independent, may keep themselves so, if they can ; and that what the parties, who have thought proper to dispute upon that point, have wrested from each other in the course of the conflict, may be, in the issue of it, restored to the proper owner. Nations may be guilty of a conduct that would render an individual infamous for ever ; and yet carry their heads high, talk of their glory, and despise their neighbours. Your opinions,
30 and mine, I mean our political ones, are not exactly of a piece, yet I cannot think otherwise upon this subject than I have always done. England, more, perhaps, through the fault of her generals, than her councils, has in some

instances acted with a spirit of cruel animosity she was never chargeable with till now. But this is the worst that can be said. On the other hand, the Americans, who, if they had contented themselves with a struggle for lawful liberty, would have deserved applause, seem to me to have incurred the guilt of parricide, by renouncing their parent, by making her ruin their favourite object, and by associating themselves with their worst enemy, for the accomplishment of their purpose. France, and of course Spain, have acted a treacherous, a thievish part. They ¹⁰ have stolen America from England, and whether they are able to possess themselves of that jewel or not hereafter, it was doubtless what they intended. Holland appears to me in a meaner light than any of them. They quarrelled with a friend for an enemy's sake. The French led them by the nose, and the English have threshed them for suffering it. My views of the contest being, and having been always such, I have consequently brighter hopes for England than her situation some time since seemed to justify. She is the only injured party. America may, ²⁰ perhaps, call her the aggressor ; but if she were so, America has not only repelled the injury, but done a greater. As to the rest, if perfidy, treachery, avarice, and ambition, can prove their cause to have been a rotten one, those proofs are found upon them. I think, therefore, that whatever scourge may be prepared for England, on some future day, her ruin is not yet to be expected.

Acknowledge, now, that I am worthy of a place under the shed I described, and that I should make no small figure among the *quidnuncs* of Olney. . . .—Yours, my dear ³⁰ Friend, as ever,

W. C.

TO THE REV. WILLIAM UNWIN

June 8, 1783.

You are not acquainted with the Rev. Mr. Bull, of Newport; perhaps it is as well for you that you are not. You would regret still more than you do, that there are so many miles interposed between us. He spends part of the day with us to-morrow. A dissenter, but a liberal one; a man of letters and of genius; master of a fine imagination, or rather not master of it,—an imagination which, when he finds himself in the company he loves, and can
 10 confide in, runs away with him into such fields of speculation, as amuse and enliven every other imagination that has the happiness to be of the party. At other times he has a tender and delicate sort of melancholy in his disposition, not less agreeable in its way. No men are better qualified for comparisons in such a world as this, than men of such a temperament. Every scene of life has two sides, a dark and a bright one, and the mind that has an equal mixture of melancholy and vivacity is best of all
 20 qualified for the contemplation of either; it can be lively without levity, and pensive without dejection. Such a man is Mr. Bull. But—he smokes tobacco. Nothing is perfect,—

Nihil est ab omni
 Parte beatum.

... Yours,

W. C.

TO THE REV. WILLIAM UNWIN

August 4, 1783.

I have two goldfinches, which in the summer occupy the greenhouse. A few days since, being employed in cleaning out their cages, I placed that which I had in hand upon
 30 the table, while the other hung against the wall: the windows and the doors stood wide open. I went to fill

the fountain at the pump, and on my return was not a little surprised to find a goldfinch sitting on the top of the cage I had been cleaning, and singing to and kissing the goldfinch within. I approached him, and he discovered no fear; still nearer, and he discovered none. I advanced my hand towards him, and he took no notice of it. I seized him, and supposed I had caught a new bird, but casting my eye upon the other cage perceived my mistake. Its inhabitant, during my absence, had contrived to find an opening, where the wire had been a little bent, and made no other use of the escape it afforded him, than to salute his friend, and to converse with him more intimately than he had done before. I returned him to his proper mansion, but in vain. In less than a minute he had thrust his little person through the aperture again, and again perched upon his neighbour's cage, kissing him, as at the first, and singing, as if transported with the fortunate adventure. I could not but respect such friendship, as for the sake of its gratification had twice declined an opportunity to be free, and, consenting to their union, resolved that for the future one cage should hold them both. I am glad of such incidents; for at a pinch, and when I need entertainment, the versification of them serves to divert me. . . .—Yours ever, W. C.

TO THE REV. JOHN NEWTON

Nov. 3, 1783.

My dear Friend—My time is short, and my opportunity not the most favourable. My letter will consequently be short likewise, and perhaps not very intelligible. I find it no very easy matter to bring my mind into that degree of composure, which is necessary to the arrangement either of words or matter. You will naturally expect to receive some account of this confusion that I describe, some reason

given for it.—On Saturday night, at eleven o'clock, when I had not been in bed five minutes, I was alarmed by a cry of fire, announced by two or three shrill screams upon our staircase. Our servants, who were going to bed, saw it from their windows, and in appearance so near, that they thought our house in danger. I immediately rose, and putting by the curtain, saw sheets of fire rising above the ridge of Mr. Palmer's house, opposite to ours. The deception was such, that I had no doubt it had begun with *him*,
10 but soon found that it was rather farther off. In fact, it was at three places ;—in the outhouses belonging to George Griggs, Lucy and Abigail Tyrrel. Having broke out in three different parts, it is supposed to have been maliciously kindled. A tar-barrel and a quantity of tallow made a most tremendous blaze, and the buildings it had seized upon being all thatched, the appearance became every moment more formidable. Providentially, the night was perfectly calm ; so calm that candles without lanterns, of which there were multitudes in the street, burnt as steadily as
20 in a house. By four in the morning it was so far reduced, that all danger seemed to be over ; but the confusion it had occasioned was almost infinite. Every man who supposed his dwelling-house in jeopardy, emptied it as fast as he could, and conveyed his moveables to the house of some neighbour, supposed to be more secure. Ours, in the space of two hours, was so filled with all sorts of lumber, that we had not even room for a chair by the fireside. George Griggs is the principal sufferer. He gave eighteen guineas, or nearly that sum, to a woman whom, in his
30 hurry, he mistook for his wife ; but the supposed wife walked off with the money, and he will probably never recover it. He has likewise lost forty pounds' worth of wool. London never exhibited a scene of greater depredation, drunkenness, and riot. Everything was stolen that could be got at, and every drop of liquor drunk that

was not guarded. Only one thief has yet been detected ; a woman of the name of J——, who was stopped by young Handscomb with an apron full of plunder. He was forced to strike her down, before he could wrest it from her. Could you visit the place, you would see a most striking proof of a Providence interposing to stop the progress of the flames. They had almost reached, that is to say, within six yards of Daniel Raban's wood-pile, in which were fifty-pounds' worth of faggots and furze ; and exactly there they were extinguished ; otherwise, especially ¹⁰ if a breath of air had happened to move, all that side of the town must probably have been consumed. After all this dreadful conflagration, we find nothing burnt but the outhouses ; and the dwellings to which they belonged have suffered only the damage of being unroofed on that side next the fire. No lives were lost, nor any limbs broken. Mrs. Unwin, whose spirits served her while the hubbub lasted, and the day after, begins to feel the effect of it now. But I hope she will be relieved from it soon, being better this evening than I expected. As for me, ²⁰ I am impregnable to all such assaults. I have nothing, however, but this subject in my mind, and it is in vain that I invite any other into it. Having, therefore, exhausted this, I finish, assuring you of our united love, and hoping to find myself in a frame of mind more suited to my employment when I write next.—Yours, my dear Friend,
W. C.

TO THE REV. JOHN NEWTON

Nov. 17, 1783.

My dear Friend— . . . The country around us is much alarmed with apprehensions of fire. Two have happened ³⁰ since that of Olney. One at Hitchin, where the damage is said to amount to eleven thousand pounds, and another, at a place not far from Hitchin, of which I have not learnt

the name. Letters have been dropped at Bedford, threatening to burn the town ; and the inhabitants have been so intimidated as to place a guard in many parts of it, several nights past. Some madman or some devil has broke loose, who it is to be hoped will pay dear for these effusions of his malignity. Since our conflagration here, we have sent two women and a boy to the justice, for depredation ; Sue Riviss, for stealing a piece of beef, which, in her excuse, she said she intended to take care of. This lady, whom you will
10 remember, escaped for want of evidence ; not that evidence was indeed wanting, but our men of Gotham judged it unnecessary to send it. With her went the woman I mentioned before, who, it seems, has made some sort of profession, but upon this occasion allowed herself a latitude of conduct rather inconsistent with it, having filled her apron with wearing apparel, which she likewise intended to take care of. She would have gone to the county gaol, had Billy Raban, the baker's son, who prosecuted, insisted upon it ; but he good-naturedly, though I think weakly, inter-
20 posed in her favour, and begged her off. The young gentleman who accompanied these fair ones, is the junior son of Molly Boswell. He had stolen some ironwork, the property of Griggs, the butcher. Being convicted, he was ordered to be whipt, which operation he underwent at the cart's tail, from the stone-house to the high arch, and back again. He seemed to show great fortitude, but it was all an imposition upon the public. The beadle, who performed, had filled his left hand with red ochre, through which, after every stroke, he drew the lash of his whip, leaving the appearance of
30 a wound upon the skin, but in reality not hurting him at all. This being perceived by Mr. Constable Hinschcomb, who followed the beadle, he applied his cane, without any such management or precaution, to the shoulders of the too merciful executioner. The scene immediately became more interesting. The beadle could by no means be prevailed

upon to strike hard, which provoked the constable to still harder ; and this double flogging continued, till a lass of Silver-end, pitying the pitiful beadle thus suffering under the hands of the pitiless constable, joined the procession, and placing herself immediately behind the latter, seized him by his capillary club, and pulling him backwards by the same, slapt his face with a most Amazonian fury. This concatenation of events has taken up more of my paper than I intended it should, but I could not forbear to inform you how the beadle threshed the thief, the constable the 10 beadle, and the lady the constable, and how the thief was the only person concerned who suffered nothing. Mr. Teedon has been here, and is gone again. He came to thank me for an old pair of breeches. In answer to our inquiries after his health, he replied that he had a slow fever, which made him take all possible care not to inflame his blood. I admitted his prudence, but in his particular instance, could not very clearly discern the need of it. Pump water will not heat him much ; and, to speak a little in his own style, more inebriating fluids are to him, I fancy, not very attainable. He 20 brought us news, the truth of which, however, I do not vouch for, that the town of Bedford was actually on fire yesterday, and the flames not extinguished when the bearer of the tidings left it.

Swift observes, when he is giving his reasons why the preacher is elevated always above his hearers, that let the crowd be as great as it will below, there is always room enough overhead. If the French philosophers can carry their art of flying to the perfection they desire, the observation may be reversed, the crowd will be overhead, and they 30 will have most room who stay below. I can assure you, however, upon my own experience, that this way of travelling is very delightful. I dreamt, a night or two since, that I drove myself through the upper regions in a balloon and pair, with the greatest ease and security. Having finished

the tour I intended, I made a short turn, and, with one flourish of my whip, descended ; my horses prancing and curvetting with an infinite share of spirit, but without the least danger, either to me or my vehicle. The time, we may suppose, is at hand, and seems to be prognosticated by my dream, when these airy excursions will be universal, when judges will fly the circuit, and bishops their visitations ; and when the tour of Europe will be performed with much greater speed, and with equal advantage, by all who travel
10 merely for the sake of having it to say, that they have made it. . . .—Yours, my dear Friend,

WM. COWPER.

TO THE REV. WILLIAM UNWIN

[*No date.*]

Balloons are so much the mode, that even in this country we have attempted a balloon. You may possibly remember that at a place called Weston, little more than a mile from Olney, there lives a family whose name is Throckmorton. The present possessor of the estate is a young man whom I remember a boy. He has a wife, who is young, genteel, and handsome. They are Papists, but much more amiable
20 than many Protestants. We never had any intercourse with the family, though ever since we lived here we have enjoyed the range of their pleasure grounds, having been favoured with a key, which admits us into all. When this man succeeded to the estate, on the death of his elder brother, and came to settle at Weston, I sent him a complimentary card, requesting the continuance of that privilege, having till then enjoyed it by the favour of his mother, who on that occasion went to finish her days at Bath. You may conclude that he granted it, and for about two years
30 nothing more passed between us. A fortnight ago, I received an invitation in the civilest terms, in which he told me that the next day he should attempt to fill a balloon, and if it

would be any pleasure to me to be present, should be happy to see me. Your mother and I went. The whole country were there, but the balloon could not be filled. The endeavour was, I believe, very philosophically made, but such a process depends for its success upon such niceties as make it very precarious. Our reception was however flattering to a great degree, insomuch that more notice seemed to be taken of us, than we could possibly have expected; indeed rather more than of any of his other guests. They even seemed anxious to recommend themselves to our regards. We drank chocolate, and were asked to dine, but were engaged. A day or two afterwards, Mrs. Unwin and I walked that way, and were overtaken in a shower. I found a tree that I thought would shelter us both,—a large elm, in a grove that fronts the mansion. Mrs. T. observed us, and running towards us in the rain insisted on our walking in. He was gone out. We sat chatting with her till the weather cleared up, and then at her instance took a walk with her in the garden. The garden is almost their only walk, and is certainly their only retreat in which they are not liable to interruption. She offered us a key of it in a manner that made it impossible not to accept it, and said she would send us one. A few days afterwards, in the cool of the evening, we walked that way again. We saw them going toward the house, and exchanged bows and curtsies at a little distance, but did not join them. In a few minutes, when we had passed the house, and had almost reached the gate that opens out of the park into the adjoining field, I heard the iron gate belonging to the courtyard ring, and saw Mr. T. advancing hastily toward us; we made equal haste to meet him, he presented to us the key, which I told him I esteemed a singular favour, and after a few such speeches as are made on such occasions, we parted. This happened about a week ago. I concluded nothing less, than

that all this civility and attention was designed, on their part, as a prelude to a nearer acquaintance : but here at present the matter rests. I should like exceedingly to be on an easy footing there, to give a morning call, and now and then to receive one, but nothing more. For though he is one of the most agreeable men I ever saw, I could not wish to visit him in any other way, neither our house, furniture, servants, or income, being such as qualify us to make entertainments ; neither would I on any account be
 10 introduced to the neighbouring gentry, which must be the consequence of our dining there, there not being a man in the country, except himself, with whom I could endure to associate. They are squires, merely such, purse-proud and sportsmen. But Mr. T. is altogether a man of fashion, and respectable on every account

I have told you a long story. Farewell. We number the days as they pass, and are glad that we shall see you and your sister soon.—Yours, &c.

W. C.

TO THE REV. JOHN NEWTON

March 29, 1784.

20 My dear Friend—It being his majesty's pleasure that I should yet have another opportunity to write before he dissolves the parliament, I avail myself of it with all possible alacrity. I thank you for your last, which was not the less welcome for coming, like an extraordinary gazette, at a time when it was not expected.

As when the sea is uncommonly agitated, the water finds its way into creeks and holes of rocks, which in its calmer state it never reaches, in like manner the effect of these turbulent times is felt even at Orchard side, where in general
 30 we live as undisturbed by the political element, as shrimps or cockles that have been accidentally deposited in some hollow beyond the water mark, by the usual dashing of the

waves. We were sitting yesterday after dinner, the two ladies and myself, very composedly, and without the least apprehension of any such intrusion in our snug parlour, one lady knitting, the other netting, and the gentleman winding worsted, when to our unspeakable surprise a mob appeared before the window; a smart rap was heard at the door, the boys halloo'd, and the maid announced Mr. Grenville.

Puss was unfortunately let out of her box, so that the candidate, with all his good friends at his heels, was refused admittance at the grand entry, and referred to the back door, as the only possible way of approach.

Candidates are creatures not very susceptible of affronts, and would rather, I suppose, climb in at a window, than be absolutely excluded. In a minute, the yard, the kitchen, and the parlour, were filled. Mr. Grenville, advancing toward me, shook me by the hand with a degree of cordiality that was extremely seducing. As soon as he and as many more as could find chairs were seated, he began to open the intent of his visit. I told him I had no vote, for which he readily gave me credit. I assured him I had no influence, 20 which he was not equally inclined to believe, and the less, no doubt, because Mr. Ashburner, the draper, addressing himself to me at this moment, informed me that I had a great deal. Supposing that I could not be possessed of such a treasure without knowing it, I ventured to confirm my first assertion, by saying, that if I had any I was utterly at a loss to imagine where it could be, or wherein it consisted. Thus ended the conference. Mr. Grenville squeezed me by the hand again, kissed the ladies, and withdrew. He kissed likewise the maid in the kitchen, and seemed upon the whole 30 a most loving, kissing, kind-hearted gentleman. He is very young; genteel, and handsome. He has a pair of very good eyes in his head, which not being sufficient as it should seem for the many nice and difficult purposes of a senator, he has a third also, which he wore suspended by a riband from his

button-hole. The boys halloo'd, the dogs barked, Puss scampered, the hero, with his long train of obsequious followers, withdrew. We made ourselves very merry with the adventure, and in a short time settled into our former tranquillity, never probably to be thus interrupted more. I thought myself, however, happy in being able to affirm truly that I had not that influence for which he sued ; and which, had I been possessed of it, with my present views of the dispute between the Crown and the Commons, I must
 10 have refused him, for he is on the side of the former. It is comfortable to be of no consequence in a world where one cannot exercise any without disobliging somebody. The town, however, seems to be much at his service, and if he be equally successful throughout the county, he will undoubtedly gain his election. Mr. Ashburner perhaps was a little mortified, because it was evident that I owed the honour of this visit to his misrepresentation of my importance. But had he thought proper to assure Mr. Grenville that I had three heads, I should not I suppose have been
 20 bound to produce them. . . .

W. C.

M. U.

TO THE REV. JOHN NEWTON

Sept. 24, 1785.

My dear Friend— . . . I remember Southampton well, having spent much time there ; but though I was young, and had no objections on the score of conscience either to dancing or cards, I never was in the assembly-room in my life. I never was fond of company, and especially disliked it in the country. A walk to Netley Abbey, or to Free-
 30 mantle, or to Redbridge, or a book by the fireside, had always more charms for me than any other amusement that the place afforded. I was also a sailor, and being of Sir Thomas Hesketh's party, who was himself born one, was often pressed into the service. But though I gave

myself an air, and wore trousers, I had no genuine right to that honour, disliking much to be occupied in great waters, unless in the finest weather. How they contrive to elude the wearisomeness that attends a sea life, who take long voyages, you know better than I; but for my own part, I seldom have sailed so far as from Hampton river to Portsmouth, without feeling the confinement irksome, and sometimes to a degree that was almost insupportable. There is a certain perverseness, of which I believe all men have a share, but of which no man has a larger share than I;— 10 I mean that temper, or humour, or whatever it is to be called, that indisposes us to a situation, though not unpleasant in itself, merely because we cannot get out of it. I could not endure the room in which I now write, were I conscious that the door were locked. In less than five minutes I should feel myself a prisoner, though I can spend hours in it, under an assurance that I may leave it when I please, without experiencing any tedium at all. It was for this reason, I suppose, that the yacht was always disagreeable to me. Could I have stepped out of it into 20 a corn-field or a garden, I should have liked it well enough; but being surrounded with water, I was as much confined in it as if I had been surrounded by fire, and did not find that it made me any adequate compensation for such an abridgement of my liberty. I make little doubt but Noah was glad when he was enlarged from the ark; and we are sure that Jonah was, when he came out of the fish; and so was I to escape from the good sloop, the *Harriet*. W. C.

TO LADY HESKETH

Olney, Nov. 9, 1785.

My dearest Cousin—Whose last most affectionate letter 30 has run in my head ever since I received it, and which I now sit down to answer two days sooner than the post will serve

me ; I thank you for it, and with a warmth for which I am sure you will give me credit, though I do not spend many words in describing it. I do not seek *new* friends, not being altogether sure that I should find them, but have unspeakable pleasure in being still beloved by an old one. I hope that now our correspondence has suffered its last interruption, and that we shall go down together to the grave, chatting and chirping as merrily as such a scene of things as this will permit.

10 I am happy that my poems have pleased you. My volume has afforded me no such pleasure at any time, either while I was writing it, or since its publication, as I have derived from yours and my uncle's opinion of it. I make certain allowances for partiality, and for that peculiar quickness of taste, with which you both relish what you like, and after all drawbacks upon those accounts duly made, find myself rich in the measure of your approbation that still remains. But above all, I honour *John Gilpin*,
20 since it was he who first encouraged you to write. I made him on purpose to laugh at, and he served his purpose well ; but I am now in debt to him for a more valuable acquisition than all the laughter in the world amounts to, the recovery of my intercourse with you, which is to me inestimable. My benevolent and generous Cousin, when I was once asked if I wanted anything, and given delicately to understand that the inquirer was ready to supply all my occasions, I thankfully and civilly, but positively, declined the favour. I neither suffer, nor have suffered, any such inconveniences as I had not much rather endure than come under obli-
30 gations of that sort to a person comparatively with yourself a stranger to me. But to you I answer otherwise. I know you thoroughly, and the liberality of your disposition, and have that consummate confidence in the sincerity of your wish to serve me, that delivers me from all awkward constraint, and from all fear of trespassing by acceptance. To

you, therefore, I reply, yes. Whensoever, and whatsoever, and in what manner-soever you please ; and add moreover, that my affection for the giver is such as will increase to me tenfold the satisfaction that I shall have in receiving. It is necessary, however, that I should let you a little into the state of my finances, that you may not suppose them more narrowly circumscribed than they are. Since Mrs. Unwin and I have lived at Olney, we have had but one purse, although during the whole of that time, till lately, her income was nearly double mine. Her revenues indeed are 10 now in some measure reduced, and do not much exceed my own ; the worst consequence of this is, that we are forced to deny ourselves some things which hitherto we have been better able to afford, but they are such things as neither life, nor the well-being of life, depend upon. My own income has been better than it is, but when it was best, it would not have enabled me to live as my connexions demanded that I should, had it not been combined with a better than itself, at least at this end of the kingdom. Of this I had full proof during three months that I spent in 20 lodgings at Huntingdon, in which time by the help of good management, and a clear notion of economical matters, I contrived to spend the income of a twelvemonth. Now, my beloved Cousin, you are in possession of the whole case as it stands. Strain no points to your own inconvenience or hurt, for there is no need of it, but indulge yourself in communicating (no matter what) that you can spare without missing it, since by so doing you will be sure to add to the comforts of my life one of the sweetest that I can enjoy—a token and proof of your affection. 30

I cannot believe but that I should know you, notwithstanding all that time may have done : there is not a feature of your face, could I meet it upon the road, by itself, that I should not instantly recollect. I should say, that is my Cousin's nose, or those are her lips and her chin, and no

woman upon earth can claim them but herself. As for me, I am a very smart youth of my years ; I am not indeed grown grey so much as I am grown bald. No matter : there was more hair in the world than ever had the honour to belong to me ; accordingly having found just enough to curl a little at my ears, and to intermix with a little of my own, that still hangs behind, I appear, if you see me in an afternoon, to have a very decent head-dress, not easily distinguished from my natural growth, which being worn with
 10 a small bag, and a black riband about my neck, continues to me the charms of my youth, even on the verge of age. Away with the fear of writing too often ! W. C.

PS.—That the view I give you of myself may be complete, I add the two following items—That I am in debt to nobody, and that I grow fat.

TO LADY HESKETH

Olney, Dec. 6, 1785.

My dear Cousin—I write not *upon* my desk, but *about* it. Having in vain expected it by the wagon that followed your letter, I again expected it by the next ; and thinking
 20 it likely that it might arrive last night at Sherrington, I sent a man over thither this morning, hoping to see him return with it ; but again I am disappointed. I have felt an impatience to receive it that you yourself have taught me, and now think it necessary to let you know that it is not come, lest it should perhaps be detained in London, by the negligence of somebody to whom you might entrust the packing of it, or its carriage to the inn.

I shall be obliged to be more concise than I choose to be when I write to you, for want of time to indulge myself in
 30 writing more. How, will you say, can a man want time, who lives in the country, without business, and without neighbours, who visits nobody, and who is visited himself

so seldom ? My dear, I have been at the races this morning, and have another letter to write this evening ; the post sets out at seven, and it is now drawing near to six. A fine day, you will say, for the races, and the better, no doubt, because it has rained continually ever since the morning. At what races do you suppose that I have been ? I might leave you to guess, but loving you too well to leave you under the burthen of an employment that must prove for ever vain, I will even tell you, and keep you no longer in suspense. I have been at Troy, where the principal heroes of the *Iliad* have been running for such a prize as our jockeys would disdain to saddle a horse for ; and yet I assure you they acquitted themselves most nobly, though a kettle and a frying-pan were to reward their labours.

I never answered your question concerning my strong partiality to a common. I well remember making the speech of which you remind me, and the very place where I made it was upon a common, in the neighbourhood of Southampton, the name of which, however, I have forgot. But I perfectly recollect that I boasted of the sagacity that you mention just after having carried you over a dirty part of the road that led to it. My nostrils have hardly been regaled with those wild odours from that day to the present. We have no such here. If there ever were any such in this country, the enclosures have long since destroyed them ; but we have a scent in the fields about Olney, that to me is equally agreeable, and which, even after attentive examination, I have never been able to account for. It proceeds, so far as I can find, neither from herb, nor tree, nor shrub : I should suppose therefore that it is in the soil. It is exactly the scent of amber when it has been rubbed hard, only more potent. I have never observed it except in hot weather, or in places where the sun shines powerfully, and from which the air is excluded. I had a strong poetical desire to describe it when I was writing the Common-scene in *The Task*, but

feared lest the infrequency of such a singular property in the earth, should have tempted the reader to ascribe it to a fanciful nose, at least to have suspected it for a deliberate fiction. . . .

Mrs. Unwin (who begs to be mentioned to you with affectionate respect) sits knitting my stockings at my elbow, with a degree of industry worthy of Penelope herself. You will not think this an exaggeration when I tell you that I have not bought a pair these twenty years, either of thread,
10 silk, or worsted.

Adieu, my most beloved Cousin ; if you get this before I have an answer to my last, let me soon have an answer to them both.—Truly yours,

WM. COWPER.

TO LADY HESKETH

Thursday, Dec. 15, 1785.

Dearest Cousin—My desk is always pleasant, but never so pleasant as when I am writing to you. If I am not obliged to you for the thing itself, at least I am for your having decided the matter against me, and resolving that it should
20 come in spite of all my objections. Before it arrived, Mrs. Unwin had spied out for it a place that exactly suits it. A certain fly-table in the corner of the room, which I had overlooked, affords it a convenient stand when it is not wanted, and it is easily transferred to a larger when it is. If I must not know to whom I am principally indebted for it, at least let me entreat you to make my acknowledgements of gratitude and love. As to my frequent use of it, I will tell you how that matter stands. When I was writing my first volume, and was but just beginning to emerge
30 from a state of melancholy that had continued some years (from which, by the way, I do not account myself even now delivered), Mrs. Unwin insisted on my relinquishing the pen, apprehending consequences injurious to my health. When

ladies insist, you know, there is an end of the business ; obedience on our part becomes necessary. I accordingly obeyed, but having lost my fiddle, I became pensive and unhappy ; she therefore restored it to me, convinced of its utility, and from that day to this I have never ceased to scrape. Observe, however, my dear, that I scrape not always. My task that I assign myself is to translate forty lines a day ; if they pass off easily I sometimes make them fifty, but never abate any part of the allotted number. Perhaps I am occupied an hour and a half, perhaps three 10 hours ; but generally between two and three. This, you see, is labour that can hurt no man ; and what I have translated in the morning, in the evening I transcribe. . . .

With respect to the enterprise itself, there are certain points of delicacy that will not suffer me to make a public justification of it. It would ill become me avowedly to point out the faults of Pope in a preface, and would be as impolitic as indecent. But to you, my dear, I can utter my mind freely. Let me premise, however, that you answered the gentleman's inquiry, whether in blank verse or not, to a 20 marvel. It is even so ; and let some critics say what they will, I aver it, and will for ever aver it, that to give a just representation of Homer in rhyme, is a natural impossibility. Now for Pope himself : I will allow his whole merit. He has written a great deal of very musical and sweet verse in his translation of Homer, but his verse is not universally such ; on the contrary, it is often lame, feeble, and flat. He has, besides, occasionally a felicity of expression peculiar to himself ; but it is a felicity purely modern, and has nothing to do with Homer. Except the Bible, there never was in the 30 world a book so remarkable for that species of the sublime that owes its very existence to simplicity, as the works of Homer. He is always nervous, plain, natural. I refer you to your own knowledge of his copyist for a decision upon Pope's merits in these particulars. The garden in all the gaiety of

June is less flowery than his Translation. Metaphors of which Homer never dreamt, which he did not seek, and which probably he would have disdained if he had found, follow each other in quick succession like the sliding pictures in a show-box. Homer is, on occasions that call for such a style, the easiest and most familiar of all writers ; a circumstance that escaped Pope entirely, who takes most religious care that he shall everywhere strut in buckram. The speeches of his heroes are often animated to a degree that
10 Pope no doubt accounted unmannerly and rude, for he has reduced numbers of them that are of that character to the perfect standard of French goodbreeding. Shakespeare himself did not excel Homer in discrimination of character, neither is he more attentive to exact consistence and preservation of it throughout. In Pope, to whatever cause it was owing, whether he did not see it, or seeing it, accounted it an affair of no moment, this great beauty is almost absolutely annihilated. In short, my dear, there is hardly anything in the world so unlike another, as Pope's version of
20 Homer to the original. Give me a great corking pin that I may stick your faith upon my sleeve. There—it is done. Now assure yourself, upon the credit of a man who made Homer much his study in his youth, and who is perhaps better acquainted with Pope's translation of him than almost any man, having twenty-five years ago compared them with each other line by line throughout ; upon the credit of a man, too, who would not for the world deceive you in the smallest matter, that Pope never entered into the spirit of Homer ; that he never translated him ; I had
30 almost said, did not understand him : many passages it is literally true that he did not. Why, when he first entered on his task, did he (as he did, by his own confession) for ever dream that he was wandering in unknown ways, that he was lost upon heaths and forests, and awoke in terror ? I will tell you, my dear, his dreams were emblems of his

waking experience ; and I am mistaken, if I could not go near to prove that at his first setting out, he knew very little of Greek, and was never an adept in it, to the last. Therefore, my beloved Cousin, once more take heart. I have a fair opportunity to acquire honour ; and if when I have finished the *Iliad*, I do not upon cool consideration think that I have secured it, I will burn the copy.

TO LADY HESKETH

Olney, Feb. 9, 1786.

. . . And now, my dear, let me tell you once more, that your kindness in promising us a visit has charmed us both. ¹⁰ I shall see you again. I shall hear your voice. We shall take walks together. I will show you my prospects, the hovel, the alcove, the Ouse, and its banks, everything that I have described. I anticipate the pleasure of those days not very far distant, and feel a part of it at this moment. Talk not of an inn ! Mention it not for your life ! We have never had so many visitors, but we could easily accommodate them all ; though we have received Unwin, and his wife, and his sister, and his son all at once. My dear, I will not let you come till the end of May, or beginning of June, because ²⁰ before that time my green-house will not be ready to receive us, and it is the only pleasant room belonging to us. When the plants go out, we go in. I line it with mats, and spread the floor with mats ; and there you shall sit with a bed of mignonette at your side, and a hedge of honeysuckles, roses, and jasmine ; and I will make you a bouquet of myrtle every day. Sooner than the time I mention the country will not be in complete beauty: And I will tell you what you shall find at your first entrance. Imprimis, as soon as you have entered the vestibule, if you cast a look on ³⁰ either side of you, you shall see on the right hand a box of my making. It is the box in which have been lodged all my

hares, and in which lodges Puss at present : but he, poor fellow, is worn out with age, and promises to die before you can see him. On the right hand stands a cupboard, the work of the same author ; it was once a dove-cage, but I transformed it. Opposite to you stands a table, which I also made : but a merciless servant having scrubbed it until it became paralytic, it serves no purpose now but of ornament ; and all my clean shoes stand under it. On the left hand, at the farther end of this superb vestibule, you
10 will find the door of the parlour, into which I will conduct you, and where I will introduce you to Mrs. Unwin, unless we should meet her before, and where we will be as happy as the day is long. Order yourself, my Cousin, to the Swan at Newport, and there you shall find me ready to conduct you to Olney.

My dear, I have told Homer what you say about casks and urns, and have asked him, whether he is sure that it is a cask in which Jupiter keeps his wine. He swears that it is a cask, and that it will never be anything better than a
20 cask to eternity. So if the god is content with it, we must even wonder at his taste, and be so too.—Adieu ! my dearest, dearest Cousin.

W. C.

TO LADY HESKETH

Olney, Feb. 11, 1786.

My dearest Cousin— . . . I do not wish to remind the Chancellor of his promise. Ask you why, my Cousin ? Because I suppose it would be impossible. He has, no doubt, forgotten it entirely, and would be obliged to take my word for the truth of it, which I could not bear. We drank tea together with Mrs. C——e, and her sister, in King Street,
30 Bloomsbury, and there was the promise made. I said— ‘Thurlow, I am nobody, and shall be always nobody, and you will be Chancellor. You shall provide for me when you are.’ He smiled, and replied, ‘I surely will.’—‘These

ladies,' said I, 'are witnesses.' He still smiled, and said—
'Let them be so, for I will certainly do it.' But alas!
twenty-four years have passed since the day of the date
thereof; and to mention it now would be to upbraid him
with inattention to his plighted troth. Neither do I suppose
he could easily serve such a creature as I am, if he would.—
Adieu, whom I love entirely, W. C.

TO LADY HESKETH

Olney, April 17, 1786.

... The vicarage was built by Lord Dartmouth, and was
not finished till some time after we arrived at Olney, con- 10
sequently it is new. It is a smart stone building, well
sashed, by much too good for the living, but just what I
would wish for you. It has, as you justly concluded from
my premises, a garden, but rather calculated for use than
ornament. It is square, and well walled, but has neither
arbour, nor alcove, nor other shade, except the shadow of
the house. But we have two gardens, which are yours.
Between your mansion and ours is interposed nothing but an
orchard, into which a door opening out of our garden affords
us the easiest communication imaginable, will save the 20
roundabout by the town, and make both houses one. Your
chamber windows look over the river, and over the meadows,
to a village called Emberton, and command the whole length
of a long bridge, described by a certain poet, together with
a view of the road at a distance. Should you wish for books
at Olney, you must bring them with you, or you will wish in
vain, for I have none but the works of a certain poet,
Cowper, of whom perhaps you have heard, and they are
as yet but two volumes. They may multiply hereafter;
but at present they are no more. 30

You are the first person for whom I have heard Mrs.
Unwin express such feelings as she does for you. She is not
profuse in professions, nor forward to enter into treaties of

friendship with new faces ; but when her friendship is once engaged, it may be confided in even unto death. She loves you already, and how much more will she love you before this time twelvemonth ! I have indeed endeavoured to describe you to her, but perfectly as I have you by heart, I am sensible that my picture cannot do you justice. I never saw one that did. Be you what you may, you are much beloved, and will be so at Olney, and Mrs. U. expects you with the pleasure that one feels at the return of a long absent, 10 dear relation ; that is to say, with a pleasure such as mine. She sends you her warmest affections.

On Friday I received a letter from dear Anonymous, apprising me of a parcel that the coach would bring me on Saturday. Who is there in the world that has, or thinks he has, reason to love me to the degree that he does ? But it is no matter. He chooses to be unknown, and his choice is, and ever shall be so sacred to me, that if his name lay on the table before me reversed, I would not turn the paper about that I might read it. Much as it would gratify me to 20 thank him, I would turn my eyes away from the forbidden discovery. I long to assure him that those same eyes, concerning which he expresses such kind apprehensions, lest they should suffer by this laborious undertaking, are as well as I could expect them to be, if I were never to touch either book or pen. Subject to weakness, and occasional slight inflammations, it is probable that they will always be ; but I cannot remember the time when they enjoyed anything so like an exemption from those infirmities as at present. One would almost suppose that reading Homer 30 were the best ophthalmic in the world. I should be happy to remove his solicitude on the subject, but it is a pleasure that he will not let me enjoy. Well then, I will be content without it ; and so content that, though I believe you, my dear, to be in full possession of all this mystery, you shall never know me, while you live, either directly, or by hints of

any sort, attempt to extort, or to steal the secret from you. I should think myself as justly punishable as the Bethshemites, for looking into the Ark, which they were not allowed to touch.

I have not sent for Kerr, for Kerr can do nothing but send me to Bath, and to Bath I cannot go for a thousand reasons. The summer will set me up again. I grow fat every day, and shall be as big as Gog or Magog, or both put together, before you come.

I did actually live three years with Mr. Chapman, a ¹⁰ solicitor, that is to say, I slept three years in his house ; but I lived, that is to say, I spent my days in Southampton Row, as you very well remember. There was I, and the future Lord Chancellor, constantly employed from morning to night in giggling and making giggle, instead of studying the law. O fie, Cousin ! how could you do so ? I am pleased with Lord Thurlow's inquiries about me. If he takes it into that inimitable head of his, he may make a man of me yet. I could love him heartily, if he would but deserve it at my hands. That I did so once is certain. The Duchess of——, ²⁰ who in the world set her a-going ? But if all the duchesses in the world were spinning, like so many whirligigs, for my benefit, I would not stop them. It is a noble thing to be a poet, it makes all the world so lively. I might have preached more sermons than even Tillotson did, and better, and the world have been still fast asleep ; but a volume of verse is a fiddle that puts the universe in motion.—
Yours, my dear Friend and Cousin, W. C.

TO LADY HESKETH

Olney, June 4 and 5, 1786.

Ah ! my Cousin, you begin already to fear and quake. ³⁰ What a hero am I, compared with you ! I have no fears of *you* ; on the contrary am as bold as a lion. I wish that your carriage were even now at the door. You should soon

see with how much courage I would face you. But what cause have you for fear ? Am I not your cousin, with whom you have wandered in the fields of Freemantle, and at Bevis's Mount ? who used to read to you, laugh with you, till our sides have ached, at anything, or nothing ? And am I in these respects at all altered ? You will not find me so ; but just as ready to laugh, and to wander, as you ever knew me. A cloud perhaps may come over me now and then, for a few hours, but from clouds I was never exempted. And
10 are not you the identical Cousin with whom I have performed all these feats ? The very Harriet whom I saw, for the first time, at De Grey's in Norfolk Street ? (It was on a Sunday, when you came with my uncle and aunt to drink tea there, and I had dined there, and was just going back to Westminster.) If these things are so, and I am sure that you cannot gainsay a syllable of them all, then this consequence follows ; and I do not promise myself more pleasure from your company than I shall be sure to find. Then you are my Cousin, in whom I always delighted, and
20 in whom I doubt not that I shall delight even to my latest hour. But this wicked coach-maker has sunk my spirits. What a miserable thing it is to depend, in any degree, for the accomplishment of a wish, and that wish so fervent, on the punctuality of a creature who I suppose was never punctual in his life ! Do tell him, my dear, in order to quicken him, that if he performs his promise, he shall make my coach when I want one, and that if he performs it not, I will most assuredly employ some other man.

The Throckmortons sent a note to invite us to dinner ;
30 we went, and a very agreeable day we had. They made no fuss with us, which I was heartily glad to see, for where I give trouble I am sure that I cannot be welcome. Themselves, and their chaplain, and we, were all the party. After dinner we had much cheerful and pleasant talk, the particulars of which might not perhaps be so entertaining

upon paper, therefore all but one I will omit, and that I will mention only because it will of itself be sufficient to give you an insight into their opinion on a very important subject,—their own religion. I happened to say that in all professions and trades mankind affected an air of mystery. Physicians, I observed, in particular, were objects of that remark, who persist in prescribing in Latin, many times no doubt to the hazard of a patient's life, through the ignorance of an apothecary. Mr. Throckmorton assented to what I said, and turning to his chaplain, to my infinite surprise observed to him, '*That is just as absurd as our praying in Latin.*' I could have hugged him for his liberality, and freedom from bigotry, but thought it rather more decent to let the matter pass without any visible notice. I therefore heard it with pleasure, and kept my pleasure to myself. The two ladies in the meantime were tête-à-tête in the drawing-room. Their conversation turned principally (as I afterwards learned from Mrs. Unwin) on a most delightful topic, viz. myself. In the first place, Mrs. Throckmorton admired my book, from which she quoted by heart more than I could repeat, though I so lately wrote it. . . .

TO THE REV. WILLIAM UNWIN

Olney, July 3, 1786.

My dear William—After a long silence I begin again. A day given to my friends, is a day taken from Homer, but to such an interruption now and then occurring, I have no objection. Lady Hesketh is, as you observe, arrived, and has been with us near a fortnight. She pleases everybody, and is pleased in her turn with everything she finds at Olney; is always cheerful and sweet-tempered, and knows no pleasure equal to that of communicating pleasure to us, and to all around her. This disposition in her is the more comfortable, because it is not the humour of the day, a sudden flash of benevolence

and good spirits, occasioned merely by a change of scene ; but it is her natural turn, and has governed all her conduct ever since I knew her first. We are consequently happy in her society, and shall be happier still to have you to partake with us in our joy. I can now assure you that her complexion is not at all indebted to art, having seen a hundred times the most convincing proof of its authenticity, her colour fading, and glowing again alternately as the weather, or her own temperature has happened to
10 affect it, while she has been sitting before me. I am fond of the sound of bells, but was never more pleased with those of Olney than when they rang her into her new habitation. It is a compliment that our performers upon those instruments have never paid to any other personage (Lord Dartmouth excepted) since we knew the town. In short, she is, as she ever was, my pride and my joy, and I am delighted with everything that means to do her honour. Her first appearance was too much for me ; my spirits, instead of being greatly raised, as I had inadvertently
20 supposed they would be, broke down with me under the pressure of too much joy, and left me flat, or rather melancholy throughout the day, to a degree that was mortifying to myself, and alarming to her. But I have made amends for this failure since, and in point of cheerfulness have far exceeded her expectations, for she knew that sable had been my suit for many years.

And now I shall communicate intelligence that will give you pleasure. When you first contemplated the front of our abode, you were shocked. In your eyes it had the
30 appearance of a prison, and you sighed at the thought that your mother dwelt in it. Your view of it was not only just, but prophetic. It had not only the aspect of a place built for the purpose of incarceration, but has actually served that purpose through a long, long period, and we have been the prisoners. But a gaol delivery is at

hand. The bolts and bars are to be loosed, and we shall escape. A very different mansion, both in point of appearance and accommodation, expects us, and the expense of living in it not greater than we are subjected to in this. It is situated at Weston, one of the prettiest villages in England, and belongs to Mr. Throckmorton. We all three dine with him to-day by invitation, and shall survey it in the afternoon, point out the necessary repairs, and finally adjust the treaty. I have my Cousin's promise that she will never let another year pass without a visit to us ; 10 and the house is large enough to contain us, and our suite, and her also, with as many of hers as she shall choose to bring. The change will I hope prove advantageous both to your mother and me in all respects. Here we have no neighbourhood, there we shall have most agreeable neighbours in the Throckmortons. Here we have a bad air in winter, impregnated with the fishy smelling fumes of the marsh miasma ; there we shall breathe in an atmosphere untainted. Here we are confined from September to March, and sometimes longer ; there we shall be upon the 20 very verge of pleasure-grounds in which we can always ramble, and shall not wade through almost impassable dirt to get at them. Both your mother's constitution and mine have suffered materially by such close and long confinement, and it is high time, unless we intend to retreat into the grave, that we should seek out a more wholesome residence. A pretty deal of new furniture will be wanted, especially chairs and beds, all which my kind Cousin will provide, and fit up a parlour and a chamber for herself into the bargain. So far is well, the 30 rest is left to Heaven.

Our love is with all your lovelies, both great and small.—
Yours ever, W. C.

TO THE REV. WILLIAM UNWIN

Olney, Sept. 24, 1786.

My dear William— . . . You have had your troubles and we ours. This day three weeks your mother received a letter from Mr. Newton, which she has not yet answered nor is likely to answer hereafter. It gave us both much concern, but her more than me ; I suppose because my mind being necessarily occupied in my work, I had not so much leisure to browse upon the wormwood that it contained. The purport of it is a direct accusation of me, and
10 of her an accusation implied, that we have both deviated into forbidden paths, and lead a life unbecoming the Gospel. That many of my friends in London are grieved, and the simple people of Olney astonished ; that he never so much doubted of my restoration to Christian privileges as now ;—in short, that I converse too much with people of the world, and find too much pleasure in doing so. He concludes with putting your mother in mind that there is still an intercourse between London and Olney ; by which he means to insinuate that we cannot offend against the
20 decorum that we are bound to observe, but the news of it will most certainly be conveyed to him. We do not at all doubt it ;—we never knew a lie hatched at Olney that waited long for a bearer ; and though we do not wonder to find ourselves made the subjects of a false accusation in a place ever fruitful of such productions, we do and must wonder a little, that he should listen to them with so much credulity. I say this, because if he had heard only the truth, or had believed no more than the truth, he would not, I think, have found either me censurable or your
30 mother. And that *she* should be suspected of irregularities is the more wonderful (for wonderful it would be at any rate), because she sent him not long before a letter conceived in such strains of piety and spirituality as ought to

have convinced him that she at least was no wanderer. But what is the fact, and how do we spend our [time] in reality? What are the deeds for which we have been represented as thus criminal? Our present course of life differs in nothing from that which we have both held these thirteen years, except that, after great civilities shown us, and many advances made on the part of the Throcks, we visit them. That we visit also at Gayhurst; that we have frequently taken airings with my cousin in her carriage; and that I have sometimes taken a walk with her on 10 a Sunday evening and sometimes by myself, which however your mother has never done. These are the only novelties in our practice; and if by these procedures, so inoffensive in themselves, we yet give offence, offence must needs be given. God and our own consciences acquit us, and we acknowledge no other judges.

The two families with whom we have kicked up this astonishing intercourse are as harmless in their conversation and manners as can be found anywhere. And as to my poor cousin, the only crime that she is guilty of against 20 the people of Olney is, that she has fed the hungry, clothed the naked, and administered comfort to the sick;—except indeed that, by her great kindness, she has given us a little lift in point of condition and circumstances, and has thereby excited envy in some who have not the knack of rejoicing in the prosperity of others. And this I take to be the root of the matter.

My dear William, I do not know that I should have teased your nerves and spirits with this disagreeable theme, had not Mr. Newton talked of applying to you for 30 particulars. He would have done it, he says, when he saw you last, but had not time. You are now qualified to inform him as minutely as we ourselves could of all our enormities! Adieu!—Our sincerest love to yourself and yours,

WM. C.

TO LADY HESKETH

The Lodge, Nov. 27, 1787.

It is the part of wisdom, my dearest Cousin, to sit down contented under the demands of necessity, because they are such. I am sensible that you cannot in my uncle's present infirm state, and of which it is not possible to expect any considerable amendment, indulge either us, or yourself, with a journey to Weston. Yourself I say, both because I know it will give you pleasure to see *Causidice mi* once more, especially in the comfortable abode where
10 you have placed him, and because after so long an imprisonment in London, you who love the country and have a taste for it, would of course be glad to return to it. For my own part, to me it is ever new, and though I have now been an inhabitant of this village a twelvemonth, and have during the half of that time been at liberty to expatiate, and to make discoveries, I am daily finding out fresh scenes and walks, which you would never be satisfied with enjoying ;—some of them are unapproachable by you either on foot or in your carriage. Had you twenty toes
20 (whereas I suppose you have but ten) you could not reach them ; and coach wheels have never been there since the flood. Before it indeed (as Burnet says that the earth was then perfectly free from all inequalities in its surface), they might have been seen there every day. We have other walks both upon hill-tops and in valleys beneath, some of which by the help of your carriage, and many of them without its help, would be always at your command.

On Monday morning last, Sam brought me word that there was a man in the kitchen who desired to speak with
30 me. I ordered him in. A plain, decent, elderly figure made its appearance, and being desired to sit, spoke as follows : ' Sir, I am clerk of the parish of All-Saints, in Northampton ; brother of Mr. Cox the upholsterer. It is customary for

the person in my office to annex to a bill of mortality, which he publishes at Christmas, a copy of verses. You would do me a great favour, Sir, if you would furnish me with one.' To this, I replied. 'Mr. Cox, you have several men of genius in your town, why have you not applied to some of them? There is a namesake of yours in particular, Cox, the statuary, who, everybody knows, is a first-rate maker of verses. He surely is the man of all the world for your purpose.'—'Alas! Sir, I have heretofore borrowed help from him, but he is a gentleman of 10 so much reading, that the people of our town cannot understand him.' I confess to you, my dear, I felt all the force of the compliment implied in this speech, and was almost ready to answer, Perhaps, my good Friend, they may find me unintelligible too for the same reason. But on asking him whether he had walked over to Weston on purpose to implore the assistance of my Muse, and on his replying in the affirmative, I felt my mortified vanity a little consoled, and pitying the poor man's distress which appeared to be considerable, promised to supply him. 20 The wagon has accordingly gone this day to Northampton loaded in part with my effusions in the mortuary style. A fig for poets who write epitaphs upon individuals! I have written *one*, that serves *two hundred* persons. . . .

A poor man begged food at the Hall lately. The cook gave him some vermicelli soup. He ladled it about some-time with the spoon, and then returned it to her, saying, 'I am a poor man it is true, and I am very hungry, but yet I cannot eat broth with maggots in it.' Once more, my dear, a thousand thanks for your box full of good things, 30 useful things, and beautiful things.—Yours ever, W. C.

TO LADY HESKETH

Dec. 19, 1787.

Saturday, my dearest Cousin, was a day of receipts. In the morning I received a box filled with an abundant variety of stationery ware, containing, in particular, a quantity of paper sufficient, well covered with good writing, to immortalize any man. I have nothing to do, therefore, but to cover it as aforesaid, and my name will never die. In the evening I received a smaller box, but still more welcome on account of its contents. It contained an
10 almanack in red morocco, a pencil of a new invention, called an everlasting pencil, and a noble purse, with a noble gift in it, called a Bank-note for twenty-five pounds. I need use no arguments to assure you, my Cousin, that by the help of ditto note, we shall be able to fadge very comfortably till Christmas is turned, without having the least occasion to draw upon you. By the post yesterday—that is, Sunday morning—I received also a letter from Anonymous, giving me advice of the kind present which I have just particularized ; in which letter allusion is made
20 to a certain piece by me composed, entitled, I believe, *The Drop of Ink*. The only copy I ever gave of that piece, I gave to yourself. It is *possible*, therefore, that between you and *Anonymous* there may be some communication. If that should be the case, I will beg you just to signify to him, as opportunity may occur, the safe arrival of his most acceptable present, and my most grateful sense of it.

My toothache is in a great measure, that is to say, almost entirely, removed ; not by snipping my ears, as poor Lady Strange's ears were snipped, nor by any other
30 chirurgical operation, except such as I could perform myself. The manner of it was as follows : we dined last Thursday at the Hall ; I sat down to table, trembling lest the tooth, of which I told you in my last, should not only

refuse its own office, but hinder all the rest. Accordingly, in less than five minutes, by a hideous dislocation of it, I found myself not only in great pain, but under an absolute prohibition not only to eat, but to speak another word. Great emergencies sometimes meet with most effectual remedies. I resolved, if it were possible, then and there to draw it. This I effected so dexterously by a sudden twitch, and afterwards so dexterously conveyed it into my pocket, that no creature present, not even Mrs. Unwin, who sat facing me, was sensible either of my distress, or of the 10 manner of my deliverance from it. I am poorer by one tooth than I was, but richer by the unimpeded use of all the rest. . . .

My dog, my dear, is a spaniel. Till Miss Gunning begged him, he was the property of a farmer, and while he was their property had been accustomed to lie in the chimney-corner, among the embers, till the hair was singed from his back, and till nothing was left of his tail but the gristle. Allowing for these disadvantages, he is really handsome ; and when nature shall have furnished him with a new 20 coat, a gift which, in consideration of the ragged condition of his old one, it is hoped she will not long delay, he will then be unrivalled in personal endowments by any dog in this country. He and my cat are excessively fond of each other, and play a thousand gambols together that it is impossible not to admire. . . .

Returning from my walk to-day, while I was passing by some small closes at the back of the town, I heard the voices of some persons extremely merry at the top of the hill. Advancing into the large field behind the house, 30 I there met Mr. Throck, wife, and brother George. Combine in your imagination as large proportions as you can of earth and water intermingled so as to constitute what is commonly called mud, and you will have but an imperfect conception of the quantity that had attached itself to her

petticoats: but she had half-boots, and laughed at her own figure. She told me that she had this morning transcribed sixteen pages of my Homer. I observed in reply, that to write so much, and to gather all that dirt, was no bad morning's work, considering the shortness of the day at this season.—Yours, my dear, W. C.

TO LADY HESKETH

The Lodge, Dec. 24, 1787.

My dearest Cousin—The Throcks do not leave Weston till after Easter. But this I hope will have no effect upon
 10 your movements, should an opportunity present itself to you of coming sooner. We dined there last Saturday. After dinner, while we all sat round the fire, I told them, as I related it to you, the adventure of my tooth. This drew from Mrs. Throck (singular as it must appear), a tale the very counterpart of mine. She, in like manner, had a tooth to draw, while I was drawing mine; and thus it came to pass (the world, I suppose, could not furnish such another instance) that we two, without the least intimation to each other of our respective distress, were
 20 employed in the same moment, sitting side by side, in drawing each a tooth: an operation which we performed with equal address, and without being perceived by any one.

This morning had very near been a tragical one to me, beyond all that have ever risen upon me. Mrs. Unwin rose as usual at seven o'clock; at eight she came to me, and showed me her bed-gown with a great piece burnt out of it. Having lighted her fire, which she always lights herself, she placed the candle upon the hearth. In a few
 30 moments it occurred to her that, if it continued there, it might possibly set fire to her clothes, therefore she put it out. But in fact, though she had not the least suspicion

of it, her clothes were on fire at that very time. She found herself uncommonly annoyed by smoke, such as brought the water into her eyes; supposing that some of the billets might lie too forward, she disposed them differently; but finding the smoke increase, and grow more troublesome (for by this time the room was full of it), she cast her eye downward, and perceived not only her bed-gown, but her petticoat on fire. She had the presence of mind to gather them in her hand, and plunge them immediately into the basin, by which means the general conflagration of ¹⁰ her person, which must have probably ensued in a few moments, was effectually prevented. Thus was that which I have often heard from the pulpit, and have often had occasion myself to observe, most clearly illustrated,—that, secure as we may sometimes seem to ourselves, we are in reality never so safe as to have no need of a superintending Providence. Danger can never be at a distance from creatures who dwell in houses of clay. Therefore take care of thyself, gentle Yahoo! and may a more vigilant than thou care for thee. . . .

20

I forgot to tell you that my dog is spotted liver-colour and white, or rather white and chestnut. He is at present my pupil as well as dog, and just before I sat down to write I gave him a lesson in the science of fetch and carry. He performs with an animation past all conception, except your own, whose poor head will never forget Tinker. But I am now grown more reasonable, and never make such a dreadful din but when Beau and I are together. To teach him is necessary, in order that he may take the water, and *that* is necessary in order that he may be sweet ³⁰ in summer. Farewell, my dearest Coz. I am, with Mrs. U.'s affections, ever thine, most truly, WM. COWPER.

TO LADY HESKETH

The Lodge, March 3, 1788.

One day last week, Mrs. Unwin and I, having taken our morning walk and returning homeward through the wilderness, met the Throckmortons. A minute after we had met them, we heard the cry of hounds at no great distance, and mounting the broad stump of an elm which had been felled, and by the aid of which we were enabled to look over the wall, we saw them. They were all at that time in our orchard ; presently we heard a terrier, belonging to Mrs.
10 Throckmorton, which you may remember by the name of Fury, yelping with much vehemence, and saw her running through the thickets within a few yards of us at her utmost speed, as if in pursuit of something which we doubted not was the fox. Before we could reach the other end of the wilderness, the hounds entered also ; and when we arrived at the gate which opens into the grove, there we found the whole weary cavalcade assembled. The huntsman dismounting, begged leave to follow his hounds on foot, for he was sure, he said, that they had killed him : a conclusion
20 which I suppose he drew from their profound silence. He was accordingly admitted, and with a sagacity that would not have dishonoured the best hound in the world, pursuing precisely the same track which the fox and the dogs had taken, though he had never had a glimpse of either after their first entrance through the rails, arrived where he found the slaughtered prey. He soon produced dead reynard, and rejoined us in the grove with all his dogs about him. Having an opportunity to see a ceremony, which I was pretty sure would never fall in my way again, I determined to stay and
30 to notice all that passed with the most minute attention. The huntsman having by the aid of a pitchfork lodged reynard on the arm of an elm, at the height of about nine feet from the ground, there left him for a considerable time.

The gentlemen sat on their horses contemplating the fox, for which they had toiled so hard, and the hounds assembled at the foot of the tree, with faces not less expressive of the most rational delight, contemplated the same object. The huntsman remounted ; cut off a foot, and threw it to the hounds ;—one of them swallowed it whole like a bolus. He then once more alighted and drawing down the fox by the hinder legs, desired the people, who were by this time rather numerous, to open a lane for him to the right and left. He was instantly obeyed, when throwing the fox to the distance 10 of some yards, and screaming like a fiend, ‘ tear him to pieces ’—at least six times repeatedly, he consigned him over absolutely to the pack, who in a few minutes devoured him completely. Thus, my dear, as Virgil says, what none of the gods could have ventured to promise me, time itself, pursuing its accustomed course, has of its own accord presented me with. I have been in at the death of a fox, and you now know as much of the matter as I, who am as well informed as any sportsman in England.—Yours, W. C.

TO MRS. KING

Weston Underwood, Oct. 11, 1788. 20

My dear Madam—You are perfectly secure from all danger of being overwhelmed with presents from me. It is not much that a poet can possibly have it in his power to give. When he has presented his own works, he may be supposed to have exhausted all means of donation. They are his only superfluity. There was a time, but that time was before I commenced writer for the press, when I amused myself in a way somewhat similar to yours ; allowing, I mean, for the difference between masculine and female operations. The scissors and the needle are your chief im- 30 plements ; mine were the chisel and the saw. In those days you might have been in some danger of too plentiful

a return for your favours. Tables, such as they were, and joint stools, such as never were, might have travelled to Pertenhall in most inconvenient abundance. But I have long since discontinued this practice, and many others which I found it necessary to adopt, that I might escape the worst of all evils, both in itself and in its consequences—an idle life. Many arts I have exercised with this view, for which nature never designed me ; though among them were some in which I arrived at considerable proficiency, by mere
10 dint of the most heroic perseverance. There is not a 'squire in all this country who can boast of having made better squirrel-houses, hutches for rabbits, or bird-cages, than myself : and in the article of cabbage-nets, I had no superior. I even had the hardiness to take in hand the pencil, and studied a whole year the art of drawing. Many figures were the fruit of my labours, which had, at least, the merit of being unparalleled by any production either of art or nature. But before the year was ended, I had occasion to wonder at the progress that may be made, in despite of natural
20 deficiency, by dint alone of practice ; for I actually produced three landscapes, which a lady thought worthy to be framed and glazed. I then judged it high time to exchange this occupation for another, lest, by any subsequent productions of inferior merit, I should forfeit the honour I had so fortunately acquired. But gardening was, of all employments, that in which I succeeded best ; though even in this I did not suddenly attain perfection. I began with lettuces and cauliflowers : from them I proceeded to cucumbers ; next to melons. I then purchased an orange-tree, to which,
30 in due time, I added two or three myrtles. These served me day and night with employment during a whole severe winter. To defend them from the frost, in a situation that exposed them to its severity, cost me much ingenuity and much attendance. I contrived to give them a fire heat ; and have waded night after night through the snow, with

the bellows under my arm, just before going to bed, to give the latest possible puff to the embers, lest the frost should seize them before morning. Very minute beginnings have sometimes important consequences. From nursing two or three little evergreens, I became ambitious of a green-house, and accordingly built one ; which, verse excepted, afforded me amusement for a longer time than any expedient of all the many to which I have fled for refuge from the misery of having nothing to do. When I left Olney for Weston, I could no longer have a green-house of my own ; but in a 10 neighbour's garden I find a better, of which the sole management is consigned to me.

I had need take care, when I begin a letter, that the subject with which I set off be of some importance ; for before I can exhaust it, be it what it may, I have generally filled my paper. But self is a subject inexhaustible, which is the reason that though I have said little or nothing, I am afraid, worth your hearing, I have only room to add, that I am, my dear Madam, most truly yours, W. C.

TO MRS. BODHAM

Weston, Feb. 27, 1790. 20

My dearest Rose—Whom I thought withered, and fallen from the stalk, but whom I still find alive : nothing could give me greater pleasure than to know it, and to learn it from yourself. I loved you dearly when you were a child, and love you not a jot the less for having ceased to be so. Every creature that bears any affinity to my mother is dear to me, and you, the daughter of her brother, are but one remove distant from her : I love you, therefore, and love you much, both for her sake, and for your own. The world could not have furnished you with a present so acceptable to 30 me, as the picture which you have so kindly sent me. I received it the night before last, and viewed it with a

trepidation of nerves and spirits somewhat akin to what I should have felt, had the dear original presented herself to my embraces. I kissed it, and hung it where it is the last object that I see at night, and, of course, the first on which I open my eyes in the morning. She died when I completed my sixth year ; yet I remember her well, and am an ocular witness of the great fidelity of the copy. I remember, too, a multitude of the maternal tendernesses which I received from her, and which have endeared her memory to me
10 beyond expression. There is in me, I believe, more of the Donne than of the Cowper ; and though I love all of both names, and have a thousand reasons to love those of my own name, yet I feel the bond of nature draw me vehemently to your side. I was thought in the days of my childhood much to resemble my mother ; and in my natural temper, of which at the age of fifty-eight I must be supposed to be a competent judge, can trace both her, and my late uncle, your father. Somewhat of his irritability ; and a little, I would hope, both of his and of her——, I know not what to call it,
20 without seeming to praise myself, which is not my intention, but speaking to *you*, I will even speak out, and say *good nature*. Add to all this, I deal much in poetry, as did our venerable ancestor, the Dean of St. Paul's, and I think I shall have proved myself a Donne at all points. The truth is, that whatever I am, I love you all.

I account it a happy event that brought the dear boy, your nephew, to my knowledge ; and that breaking through all the restraints which his natural bashfulness imposed on him, he determined to find me out. He is amiable to a
30 degree that I have seldom seen, and I often long with impatience to see him again.

My dearest Cousin, what shall I say to you in answer to your affectionate invitation ? I *must* say this, I cannot come now, nor soon, and I wish with all my heart I could. But I will tell you what may be done, perhaps, and it will

answer to us just as well : you and Mr. Bodham can come to Weston, can you not ? The summer is at hand, there are roads and wheels to bring you, and you are neither of you translating Homer. I am crazed that I cannot ask you all together, for want of house-room ; but for Mr. Bodham and yourself we have good room ; and equally good for any third, in the shape of a Donne, whether named Hewitt, Bodham, Balls, or Johnson, or by whatever name distinguished. Mrs. Hewitt has particular claims upon me ; she was my playfellow at Berkhamstead, and has a share in 10 my warmest affections. Pray tell her so ! Neither do I at all forget my Cousin Harriet. She and I have been many a time merry at Catfield, and have made the parsonage ring with laughter. Give my love to her. Assure yourself, my dearest Cousin, that I shall receive you as if you were my sister, and Mrs. Unwin is, for my sake, prepared to do the same. When she has seen you, she will love you for your own.

I am much obliged to Mr. Bodham for his kindness to my Homer, and with my love to you all, and with Mrs. 20 Unwin's kind respects, am, my dear, dear Rose, ever yours,

W. C.

PS.—I mourn the death of your poor brother Castres, whom I should have seen had he lived, and should have seen with the greatest pleasure. He was an amiable boy, and I was very fond of him.

Still another PS.—I find on consulting Mrs. Unwin, that I have underrated our capabilities, and that we have not only room for you, and Mr. Bodham, but for two of your sex, and even for your nephew into the bargain. We shall 30 be happy to have it all so occupied.

Your nephew tells me, that his sister, in the qualities of the mind, resembles you ; that is enough to make her dear to me, and I beg you will assure her that she is so. Let it not be long before I hear from you.

TO LADY HESKETH

The Lodge, June 26, 1791.

. . . It gives us true pleasure that you interest yourself so much in the state of our turnpike. Learn then the present state of it. From Gayhurst to Weston the road is a gravel-walk, but Weston itself is at present in a chaotic condition. About three weeks since they dug up the street, and having done so, left it. But it will not continue long in such disorder, and when you see it next you will find the village wonderfully improved. Already they have filled
10 up two abominable ponds more fetid than any human nostrils could endure ; they were to be found, as you must remember, one just under Farmer Archer's window, and the other a little beyond it. Covered drains are to be made wherever drains are wanted, and the causey is to be new-laid. When all this is done and the road well gravelled, we will hold our heads as high as any villagers in the kingdom. At the present time they are at work on the road from Weston to Olney. Olney is also itself in a state of beauti-
20 fication, and the road between Olney and Bedford is, I believe, nearly finished, but that I have never seen. The sooner you come to look at these things with your own eyes, the better.

I have hardly left myself room to tell you a story which yet I must tell, but as briefly as possible. While I reposed myself yesterday evening in the shop of Mr. Palmer, lying at my length on the counter, a labouring man came in. He wanted a hat for his boy, and having bought one at two shillings, said he must have a handkerchief for himself, a silk one, to wear about his neck on Sundays. After much
30 bargaining he suited himself with one at last for four shillings and sixpence. I liked the man's looks, and having just one shilling in my purse, I held it to him, saying : Here, honest friend, here's something toward paying for your

purchase ! He took the shilling and looked at me steadily for a long time, saying nothing. At last his surprise burst forth in these words—I never saw such a gentleman in my life ! He then faced about, and was again for a long time silent ; but at last, turning to me again he said—If I had known you had been so stout I would have had a better. Mr. Andrews told him that the cutting off would make no difference to him, and he might have a better if he pleased, so he took one at the price of five shillings, and went away all astonishment at my great bounty. I have ¹⁰ learned since that he is a very worthy industrious fellow, and has a mother between seventy and eighty, who walks every Sunday eight miles to hearing, as they call it, and back again. This is another instance that my skill in physiognomy never deceives me.

Adieu, my dearest Coz. With the love of all here, I remain ever thine,
WM. COWPER.

TO LADY HESKETH

The Lodge, Aug. 30, 1791.

... But now if thou hast the faculty of erecting thy ears, lift them into the air, first taking off thy cap, that they may ²⁰ have the highest possible elevation. Mrs. Unwin says,—No, don't tell her ladyship all,—tell her only enough to raise her curiosity, that she may come the sooner to Weston to have it gratified. But I say,—Yes, I will tell her all, lest she should be overcharged and burst by the way.

The Chancellor and I, my dear, have had a correspondence on the subject of Homer. He had doubts it seems about the propriety of translating him in blank verse, and wrote to Henry to tell him so, adding a translation of his own in rhyme of the speech of Achilles to Phoenix, in the ninth ³⁰ book ; and referring him to me, who, he said, could elevate it, and polish it, and give it the tone of Homer. Henry sent

this letter to me, and I answered it in one to his lordship, but not meddling with his verses, for I remembered what happened between Gil Blas and the Archbishop of Toledo. His lordship sent me two sheets in reply, filled with arguments in favour of rhyme, which I was to answer if I could ; and containing another translation of the same passage, only in blank verse, leaving it to me to give it rhyme, to make it close, and faithful, and poetical. All this I performed as best I could ; and yesterday I heard from him
 10 again. In this last letter he says,—‘ I am clearly convinced that Homer may be best translated *without* rhyme, and that you have succeeded in the passages I have looked into.’

Such is the candour of a wise man and a real scholar. I would to Heaven that all prejudiced persons were like him !—I answered this letter immediately ; and here, I suppose, our correspondence ends. Have I not made a great convert ? You shall see the letters, both his and mine, when you come. . . .—Adieu, my dearest Coz, ever thine,

WM. COWPER.

TO WILLIAM HAYLEY, ESQ.

20

Weston, July 22, 1792.

This important affair, my dear brother, is at last decided, and we are coming. Wednesday se’nnight, if nothing occur to make a later day necessary, is the day fixed for our journey. Our rate of travelling must depend on Mary’s ability to bear it. Our mode of travelling will occupy three days unavoidably, for we shall come in a coach. Abbot finishes my picture to-morrow ; on Wednesday he returns to town, and is commissioned to order one down for us, with four steeds to draw it ;

30

——hollow pamper’d jades of Asia,
 That cannot go but forty miles a day.

Send us our route, for I am as ignorant of it almost, as if

I were in a strange country. We shall reach St. Albans, I suppose, the first day ; say where we must finish our second day's journey, and at what inn we may best repose ? As to the end of the third day, we know where that will find us, viz. in the arms and under the roof of our beloved Hayley.

General Cowper, having heard a rumour of this intended migration, desires to meet me on the road, that we may once more see each other. He lives at Ham, near Kingston. Shall we go through Kingston, or near it ? For I would give ¹⁰ him as little trouble as possible, though he offers very kindly to come as far as Barnet for that purpose. Nor must I forget Carwardine, who so kindly desired to be informed what way we should go. On what point of the road will it be easiest for him to find us ? On all these points you must be my oracle. My friend and brother, we shall overwhelm you with our numbers ; this is all the trouble that I have left. My Johnny of Norfolk, happy in the thought of accompanying us, would be broken-hearted to be left behind. 20

In the midst of all these solitudes I laugh to think what they are made of, and what an important thing it is for me to travel. Other men steal away from their homes silently, and make no disturbance ; but when I move, houses are turned upside down, maids are turned out of their beds, all the counties through which I pass appear to be in an uproar. Surrey greets me by the mouth of the General, and Essex by that of Carwardine. How strange does all this seem to a man who has seen no bustle, and made none, for twenty years together !—Adieu, W. C. 30

TO WILLIAM HAYLEY, ESQ.

Weston, Feb. 24, 1793.

... Oh ! you rogue ! what would you give to have such a dream about Milton, as I had about a week since ?

I dreamed that being in a house in the city, and with much company, looking towards the lower end of the room from the upper end of it, I descried a figure which I immediately knew to be Milton's. He was very gravely, but very neatly attired in the fashion of his day, and had a countenance which filled me with those feelings that an affectionate child has for a beloved father, such, for instance, as Tom has for you. My first thought was wonder, where he could have been concealed so many years; my second, a transport
 10 of joy to find him still alive; my third, another transport to find myself in his company; and my fourth, a resolution to accost him. I did so, and he received me with a complacency, in which I saw equal sweetness and dignity. I spoke of his *Paradise Lost*, as every man must, who is worthy to speak of it at all, and told him a long story of the manner in which it affected me, when I first discovered it, being at that time a schoolboy. He answered me by a smile and a gentle inclination of his head. He then grasped my hand affectionately, and with a smile that charmed me,
 20 said, 'Well, you for your part will do well also'; at last recollecting his great age (for I understood him to be two hundred years old), I feared that I might fatigue him by much talking, I took my leave, and he took his, with an air of the most perfect good breeding. His person, his features, his manner, were all so perfectly characteristic, that I am persuaded an apparition of him could not represent him more completely. This may be said to have been one of the dreams of Pindus, may it not? . . .—With Mary's kind love, I must now conclude myself, my dear
 30 Brother, ever yours,

LIPPUS.

TO THE REV. JOHN JOHNSON

Weston, Sept. 6, 1793.

My dearest Johnny—To do a kind thing, and in a kind manner, is a double kindness, and no man is more addicted

to both than you, or more skilful in contriving them. Your plan to surprise me agreeably succeeded to admiration. It was only the day before yesterday that, while we walked after dinner in the orchard, Mrs. Unwin between Sam and me, hearing the hall-clock, I observed a great difference between that and ours, and began immediately to lament, as I had often done, that there was not a sun-dial in all Weston to ascertain the true time for us. My complaint was long, and lasted till having turned into the grass walk, we reached the new building at the end of it ; where we sat 10 awhile and reposed ourselves. In a few minutes we returned by the way we came, when what think you was my astonishment to see what I had not seen before, though I had passed close by it, a smart sun-dial mounted on a smart stone pedestal ! I assure you it seemed the effect of conjuration. I stopped short, and exclaimed,—‘ Why, here is a sun-dial, and upon our ground ! How is this ? Tell me, Sam, how came it here ? Do you know anything about it ? ’ At first I really thought (that is to say, as soon as I could think at all) that this factotum of mine, Sam Roberts, having often 20 heard me deplore the want of one, had given orders for the supply of that want himself, without my knowledge, and was half pleased and half offended. But he soon exculpated himself by imputing the fact to you. It was brought up to Weston (it seems) about noon : but Andrews stopped the cart at the blacksmith’s, whence he went to inquire if I was gone for my walk. As it happened, I walked not till two o’clock. So there it stood waiting till I should go forth, and was introduced before my return. Fortunately too 30 I went out at the church end of the village, and consequently saw nothing of it. How I could possibly pass it without seeing it, when it stood in the walk, I know not, but it is certain that I did. And where I shall fix it now, I know as little. It cannot stand between the two gates, the place of your choice, as I understand from Samuel,

because the hay-cart must pass that way in the season. But we are now busy in winding the walk all round the orchard, and in doing so shall doubtless stumble at last upon some open spot that will suit it.

There it shall stand, while I live, a constant monument of your kindness.

W. C.

TO MRS. COURTENAY

Weston, Nov. 4, 1793.

I seldom rejoice in a day of soaking rain like this ; but in this, my dearest Catharina, I do rejoice sincerely, because it affords me an opportunity of writing to you, which if fair weather had invited us into the orchard walk at the usual hour, I should not easily have found. I am a most busy man, busy to a degree that sometimes half distracts me ; but if complete distraction be occasioned by having the thoughts too much and too long attached to a single point, I am in no danger of it, with such a perpetual whirl are mine whisked about from one subject to another. When two poets meet there are fine doings I can assure you. My Homer finds work for Hayley, and his *Life of Milton* work for me, so that we are neither of us one moment idle. Poor Mrs. Unwin in the meantime sits quiet in her corner, occasionally laughing at us both, and not seldom interrupting us with some question or remark, for which she is constantly rewarded by me with a ' Hush—hold your peace.' Bless yourself, my dear Catharina, that you are not connected with a poet, especially that you have not two to deal with ; ladies who have, may be bidden indeed to hold their peace, but very little peace have they. How should they in fact have any, continually enjoined as they are to be silent ? . . .

I have persuaded Hayley to stay a week longer, and again my hopes revive, that he may yet have an oppor-

tunity to know my friends before he returns into Sussex. I write amidst a chaos of interruptions: Hayley on one hand spouts Greek, and on the other hand Mrs. Unwin continues talking, sometimes to us, and sometimes, because we are both too busy to attend to her, she holds a dialogue with herself,—Query, is not this a bull—and ought I not instead of dialogue to have said soliloquy?

Adieu! With our united love to all your party, and with ardent wishes to see you all at Weston, I remain, my dearest Catharina, ever yours,

W. C. 10

NOTES

HAZLITT'S ESSAY

THIS is extracted from Lecture V, On Thomson and Cowper, in Hazlitt's *Lectures on the English Poets*, first published in 1818.

PAGE 11, l. 8. *unbought grace* : from Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France*.

ll. 17-20. *finicalness . . . public* : but cf. *The Task*, ii, ll. 285 et seqq., and letter to Unwin, 6 Oct. 1781 (p. 121) ; also letter to Unwin, 2 July 1780. 'To touch and retouch is . . . the secret of almost all good writing, especially in verse.' Cowper took great pains over the revision of all his poems, from his translation of Homer to the merest trifle of four lines.

l. 30. *his Vashti* : see *The Task*, ii, 715.

PAGE 12, l. 3. *crazy Kate* : see *The Task*, i, 534-56.

l. 4. *party of gypsies* : see *The Task*, i, 557-91.

child on a common : perhaps Hazlitt is thinking of the passage printed on p. 61.

l. 5. *the sofa and the tea-kettle* : see pp. 61 and 67.

l. 9. *petit-maitre-ship* : dandyism.

l. 29. *frosty morning, &c.* : see *The Task*, v, beginning.

PAGE 13, l. 3. *The night, &c.* : *The Task*, vi, 57-117.

PAGE 14, l. 31. *comparison . . . pheasant* : see *Truth*, ll. 58-70.

l. 36. *Yon cottager, &c.* : *Truth*, ll. 317-36.

PAGE 15, l. 19. *Whitefield* (1714-70), evangelist, leader of the Calvinistic Methodists and friend of John Wesley ; called Leuconomus by Cowper in *Hope* :

beneath well-sounding Greek

I slur a name a poet must not speak.

ll. 22-34. *But if, unblameable, &c.* : *Hope*, ll. 622-34.

l. 36. *Monthly Reviewers*. Hazlitt has confounded the *Critical Review* with the *Monthly Review*. These lines were quoted in the unfavourable notice of Cowper's *Poems* in the *Critical Review* (April 1782). The notice in the *Monthly Review* (June 1782), which quoted other lines, was favourable. Both reviews praised *The Task*. The *Monthly Review* (June 1798) had some reason for boasting that 'we endeavoured on both occasions to do justice to the powers of Mr. Cowper, and to point out to the public his strong claims to their admiration and regard ; and we feel much self-gratulation in recollecting that the favourable decision of the world was accelerated by our introduction of this poet to their regard'.

BAGEHOT'S ESSAY

This is taken from the *National Review*, July, 1855, where it first appeared. It was afterwards included in Bagehot's *Estimates of some Englishmen and Scotchmen* (1858).

PAGE 18, l. 24-19, l. 8. *Be it a weakness: Tirocinium*, ll. 296-317.

l. 25. *play-place*: Westminster.

ll. 34-7. The first game described is marbles, the third trap bat and ball, the second explains itself. It should perhaps be noted that boys went to public schools earlier in Cowper's time than they do now.

PAGE 20, l. 27. *Gray*: see *Ode on a distant prospect of Eton College*.

l. 31. *little footsteps*: these words occur in a stanza of Gray's *Elegy*, first printed in the third edition 1751 and omitted again in 1753.

PAGE 22, l. 35. *Colman, Lloyd*: see Notes, pp. 191-2.

PAGE 23, l. 1. *an essay in the Connoisseur*: Cowper wrote four essays, reprinted by Southey in vol. xv of his edition of Cowper's complete works (1837).

PAGE 24, l. 9. *cucumbers of the Task*: see *The Task*, iii. 446-543.

PAGE 25, ll. 9-10. *Through tedious years, &c.*: see *On the death of Sir W. Russell*, ll. 9, 10 (*Oxford Cowper*, p. 285).

PAGE 26, ll. 3-4. *the sights, &c.*: from Milton's *L'Allegro*, ll. 129-30 (should be 'Such sights as youthful poets dream').

ll. 17-22. *Lucrative offices, &c.*: see *Retirement*, ll. 611-16.

PAGE 29, l. 15-30, l. 6. *We breakfast, &c.*: from a letter to Mrs. Cowper, 20 Oct. 1766.

PAGE 29, l. 27. *Martin's collection*: this refers to a 'collection of psalms and hymns' issued in 1760 by Martin Madan, Cowper's cousin, best known by his work called 'Thelyphthora' (1780), in which he advocated polygamy. Cowper published anonymously an answer to it called 'Anti-Thelyphthora' (1781); see *Oxford Cowper*, p. 317.

PAGE 31, l. 32. *Perimus in licitis*: may be paraphrased 'we are lost if we enjoy even permitted pleasures'.

PAGE 33, ll. 18-19. *An honest man, &c.*: see *An Epistle to Joseph Hill*, ll. 62, 63 (*Oxford Cowper*, p. 361).

PAGE 34, l. 16. *The Preacher*: Ecclesiastes.

PAGE 35, ll. 22-4. *Shelley*: in his *Defence of Poetry* (see *Shelley's Literary and Philosophical Criticism*, ed. Shawcross, p. 121). He would hardly have agreed with Bagehot's expansion of his definition.

l. 35. *many-headed monster thing*: From Scott's *Lady of the Lake*, canto v, l. 834.

PAGE 36, l. 1. *Bashi Bazouk*: irregular Turkish infantry; here used allusively to mean motley and irresponsible.

ll. 33-4. *natura naturans . . . natura naturata*: terms of philosophy, here meaning little more than cause and effect.

PAGE 37, l. 27. *κλέα ἀνδρῶν*: lays of men.

l. 34. *We doubt whether any people, &c.*: cf. with what Bagehot says in a passage omitted from the beginning of this essay: 'There is no writer more exclusively English. There is no one—or hardly one perhaps—whose excellencies are more natural to our soil, and seem so little able to bear transplantation. We do not remember to have seen his name in any continental book.' Bagehot had evidently not seen Sainte-Beuve's Essay, which appeared the previous year (1854) in three instalments (20 and 27 Nov., and 4 Dec.) in the *Constitutionnel*, and was republished among the famous *Causeries du Lundi*.

PAGE 38, l. 10. *gross fog Boeotian*: see *The Task*, iii. 495.

ll. 19-23. *'Tis then, &c.*: see *The Task*, iv. 296-300. 'Then' should be 'thus'.

PAGE 39, ll. 1-5. *Homeborn happiness, &c.*: a misquotation from *The Task*, iv. 139-43.

l. 10. *Mr. Rushworth*: in *Mansfield Park*.

l. 19. *brow of Egypt*: Shakespeare, *M.N.D.* v. i. 11.

PAGE 40, l. 3. *dreary intercourse*: see Wordsworth's *Tintern Abbey*, l. 131.

l. 27. *As a scold*: cf. Hazlitt's essay, p. 14. Most critics agree with Bagehot that Cowper does not shine as a satirist.

PAGE 41, l. 14. *Hazlitt*: see his essay, p. 11.

PAGE 42, ll. 5-29. *Oh Winter, &c.*: from *The Task*, iv. 120-44.

l. 19. *compensating*: compensate is now accented on the first syllable, but until the middle of the nineteenth century was usually accented on the second.

PAGE 43, ll. 3-10. *A sense sublime*: from *Tintern Abbey*, ll. 95-102.

ll. 34-6. *A primrose, &c.*: from Wordsworth's *Peter Bell*, Part First, ll. 248-50.

PAGE 44, l. 35. *the painted veil*: from Shelley's Sonnet (*Oxford Shelley*, p. 565).

PAGE 45, l. 8. *saying of Dryden*: Bagehot is perhaps thinking of Dryden's Epistle Dedicatory of *The Rival Ladies* (1664), where the following remarks occur:

'That benefit which I consider most in it [rhyme], is, that it bounds and circumscribes the fancy. . . . But, certainly, that which most regulates the fancy, and gives the judgement its busiest employment, is like to bring forth the richest and clearest thoughts.'

I cannot find any mention by Cowper of this or similar remarks. But in a rhyming letter to Newton (12 July 1781) he writes: 'though I have run, many a time, after a rhyme, as far as from hence, to the end of my sense.'

PAGE 47, l. 36. *Thus did Hercules* : Hercules spun wool for Omphale, whom he served for three years in expiation of a murder.

PAGE 50, l. 15. *Sir Rowland Hill* (1795-1879), the inventor of penny postage.

PAGE 52, ll. 28-35. *Armour rusting* : from Wordsworth's *Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle*, ll. 142-9.

l. 36. *And this is the tone of Homer* : much of Matthew Arnold's *On Translating Homer* is devoted to proving that Homer cannot be translated into ballad-metre, even if the translator were as skilful as Scott in his use of it, because 'Homer is sustainedly noble' and ballads are not. Almost every one now agrees with Arnold on this point.

PAGE 53, ll. 4-5. *Like a reappearing star*, &c. : ll. 154, 155 of the *Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle*.

l. 7. *Dr. Johnson* : see Johnson's *Life of Milton* (Birkbeck Hill's edition of his *Lives of the Poets*, l. 193), where, however, the saying is attributed by Johnson to 'an ingenious critick'.

l. 16. *Mr. Cobbett* : William Cobbett (1762-1835), a stalwart reformer, soldier, farmer, member of Parliament, and voluminous writer, with a most vigorous style on all kinds of subjects. Cobbett might have used this expression, but did not, as far as I know. It is from the first sentence of the introduction to *The Hampshire Farmer's Address*, a parody of Cobbett, in *Rejected Addresses* (1812), by James and Horace Smith.

PAGE 55, ll. 12-27. *And all day long*, &c. : from Wordsworth's *To the Daisy*, ninth and seventh stanzas.

SELECTIONS FROM POETRY

PAGES 58-61. RETIREMENT, ll. 365-480.

l. 394. *Atlas of the state* : i.e. the supporter of the state, as Atlas, one of the Titans who fought against the Gods, was fabled to be the supporter of the world.

l. 421. *balk* : a strip of ground left unploughed as a boundary line between two ploughed portions.

PAGES 61-4. THE SOFA : *The Task*, i. 109-209.

l. 110. *swarth* : grass land.

l. 121. *crabs* : crab-apples.

l. 126. *Sofa* : an allusion to the title of the first book of *The Task*. Cowper's friend Lady Austen suggested to him in June 1783 that he should write a poem in blank verse, and on his replying that he could not think of a subject said, 'Oh, you can never be in want of a subject; you can write on any,—write upon this Sofa.' The first words of the poem are 'I sing the sofa', and in l. 6 he adds 'For the Fair commands the song'.

l. 144. *dear companion* : Mrs. Unwin, whom Cowper first

met a few weeks after he settled at Huntingdon in June 1765. The reference to the 'twentieth winter' (l. 145) shows that this passage was added late in 1784 in a revision of the poem before it was sent to the printers. *The Task* was published in 1785.

ll. 154 et seq. : a description of a walk across the fields from Olney to Weston.

l. 173. *tower* : of the church of Clifton Reynes, one mile to the east of Olney.

l. 174. *spire* : of Olney church.

l. 176. *villages* : Stevenston and Emberton.

l. 202. *Nice-finger'd art* : music.

l. 205. *pie* : magpie.

PAGES 64-5. THE TIME-PIECE : *The Task*, ii. 206-54.

l. 214. *Ausonia* : a poetical name for Italy.

ll. 225 et seq. : Cowper thought that the Generals engaged in the American war did not fight as energetically as they might have fought. In a letter to Unwin (15 Dec. 1781) he writes : 'Pitt himself could have done nothing with such tools ; but he would not have been so betrayed ; he would have made the traitors answer with their heads, for their cowardice or supineness, and their punishment would have made survivors active.'

l. 242. Wolfe was killed at the taking of Quebec, 13 Sept. 1759.

l. 244. Chatham died 11 May 1778, after being seized with an apoplectic fit while speaking in the House of Lords on 8 April.

PAGES 66-71. THE WINTER EVENING : *The Task*, iv. 1-41, 243-66, 311-428.

ll. 1, 4. The first edition puts an exclamation mark after 'horn', and a comma instead of a semicolon after 'bright'. The punctuation of the text was first adopted in the edition of 1793.

ll. 25-7. Cf. note on PAGE 64, *Task*, ii. 225, et seqq.

ll. 28-30. Warren Hastings was Governor-General under the East India Company, from 1774 until 1785, when he retired. 'During those years of strain the British Government had to fight France, Spain, Holland, the revolted American colonies, besides the Marathas, and Haidar Ali' (V. A. Smith, *Oxford History of India*, p. 531). The second Mysore war—against Haidar and his son Tippoo—was concluded 'in dishonour' (V. A. Smith) by the treaty of Mangalore on 11 March 1784. Cowper, while disliking the general policy of the Company in India, considered that Hastings, an old schoolfellow of his at Westminster, was unjustly treated by his impeachment.

l. 315. *share* : plough-share.

l. 402. *skillet* : a small kettle or boiler.

l. 427. *the man*: Mr. Robert Smith, afterwards Lord Carrington (1752-1838). He sent money, under strict injunctions of secrecy, for the poor of Olney.

PAGE 71. THE SHRUBBERY. The affliction referred to in the title was Cowper's third attack of madness, which began on 24 Jan. 1773.

PAGES 73-4. BOADICEA. Boadicea, Queen of the Iceni, having been flogged by the Romans, raised an army against them in A.D. 61, but was finally defeated, and poisoned herself.

l. 20. *Gaul*: the Goths (who were not Gauls) sacked Rome in A.D. 408.

ll. 21-4. viz. when the Italians were famous only in the arts, and Britain was planting colonies in the New World.

PAGES 75-6. VERSES BY ALEXANDER SELKIRK. Selkirk (born 1676) was marooned by his captain for insubordination in 1704 and remained until taken off by another ship in 1709 after more than four years of solitude. Defoe founded *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) on Selkirk's experiences. Juan Fernandez is an island in the South Pacific, about 400 miles from Chile.

l. 35. *endearing*: here 'showing affection'.

PAGES 77-8. ON THE LOSS OF THE ROYAL GEORGE. The *Royal George* was a man-of-war of 108 guns which suddenly sank at Portsmouth in August 1782 while being repaired; more than 500 officers and men out of 848, including Admiral Kempenfelt (1715-82), were drowned.

Scipio: an opera (1726) by Handel.

l. 10. *overset*. This was not so; the ship sank because she was rotten, and some part of her bottom fell out.

l. 25. *weigh*: raise. After several unsuccessful attempts to raise her, she was blown up (1839-44).

PAGES 78-86. JOHN GILPIN. See Cowper's letter to Unwin, 18 Nov. 1782 (p. 129). Lady Austen, one evening in October 1782, tried to cheer Cowper, who was in low spirits, by telling him the story of John Gilpin as one which had been told her in her childhood. The story took Cowper's fancy, and he spent the night in turning it into verse. The *Diverting History* was published anonymously in *The Public Advertiser*, 14 Nov. 1782, and at once became popular. John Gilpin appears to have been an actual London draper, who died in 1750.

l. 3. *The Train-bands* were the old Militia of London, composed of the most substantial householders of the city.

l. 23. *calender*: one who smoothes and gives a gloss to cloth or paper by passing it through a calender or press. Calender is now used for the press only, calenderer for the man who works it.

l. 100. *running such a rig*: playing such tricks.

l. 142. *balcony*: now accented on the first syllable.

l. 178. *in merry pin*: in good spirits.

SELECTIONS FROM POETRY 191

PAGE 88. THE POPLAR-FIELD. The earliest version of the last stanza is as follows :

The change both my heart and my fancy employs,
I reflect on the frailty of man, and his joys ;
Short-lived as we are, yet our pleasures, we see,
Have a still shorter date, and die sooner than we.

PAGES 88-90. THE DOG AND THE WATER-LILY.

l. 7. *Two nymphs* : daughters of Sir Robert Gunning.

PAGES 90-93. ON THE RECEIPT OF MY MOTHER'S PICTURE.
See letter to Mrs. Bodham, 27 Feb. 1790, and notes (p. 196).

l. 53. *past'ral house* : the rectory of Great Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire, where Cowper was born.

l. 61. *confectionary plum* : sugar-plum.

l. 67. *humour* : i.e. uncertain temper.

l. 97. An inaccurate quotation from Garth's *Dispensary*, canto iii. 1 ; it should be ' Where billows never break, nor tempests roar '.

ll. 108, 109. Mrs. Cowper was descended by four different lines from King Henry III.

PAGE 97. EPITAPH ON FOP : the Throckmortons were friendly Roman Catholic neighbours of Cowper.

PAGE 100. TO MARY was written in the autumn of 1793, and was the last poem that Cowper wrote at Weston. Mrs. Unwin died in 1796 at East Dereham.

l. 1. *the twentieth year* : a reference to the year 1773, when an attack of madness broke off Cowper's engagement to Mrs. Unwin.

PAGE 102. THE CASTAWAY. The last original poem written by Cowper (on 20 March 1790). It is founded on an incident recounted in Anson's *Voyages*.

SELECTIONS FROM LETTERS

PAGE 105, l. 5. *lions in the Tower* : in Henry I's reign a portion of the Tower was given up to a menagerie, which was dispersed in 1834 ; whence the saying, ' to see the lions,' meaning, to visit the Tower.

l. 27. *Hinchinbrook House* : the seat of Oliver Cromwell's ancestors.

PAGE 106, ll. 12-20. *You are an old dog . . . to your mercy* : Hill was looking after Cowper's affairs in London, and this paragraph refers to his efforts to get rent from a certain Welshman who was occupying Cowper's chambers in the Temple. Eventually the ' bad tenant ' was induced to pay after being threatened with eviction.

l. 27. *Colman* : George Colman, the elder (1732-94), was a successful dramatist. *The jealous Wife* (1761), ' the most popular piece of its epoch,' being his best known play. He

was at Westminster with Cowper, and met him frequently when both were reading for the Bar. The 'good fortune', to which Cowper here refers was the very favourable reception given to Colman's translation of Terence, which appeared in 1765. In 1782 Cowper sent Colman a copy of his first volume of poems, but received no acknowledgement of it. He was deeply hurt, and showed his resentment in the lines in 'The Valediction', beginning:

Next, busy Actor, on a meaner stage.

(*Oxford Cowper*, p. 357, ll. 27-48.)

1. 29. *tragedies of Lloyd and Bensley*: Robert Lloyd (1733-64), a minor poet, educated at Westminster and Cambridge; afterwards usher at Westminster, editor, and bookseller's hack. His friendship with Churchill encouraged him in a dissipated life which landed him in the Fleet prison, where he died, soon after hearing the news of Churchill's death; see p. 266 of *Oxford Cowper* for Cowper, 'Epistle to Robert Lloyd, Esq.' We know little about Bensley except that he was a member of the Nonsense Club consisting of seven Old Westminsters (namely, Cowper, Bonnell Thornton, Colman, Lloyd, Joseph Hill, Bensley, and De Grey—afterwards Baron Walsingham).

PAGE 108. *Rev. William Unwin*: son of the Rev. Morley Unwin.

PAGE 109, ll. 27-8. *Oh quis*, &c.: Virgil, *Georgics*, ii. 488-9. (*Oh quis* should be *O qui*.)

1. 32. *statue of Memnon*: Memnon, son of Tithonus and Aurora, was killed by Achilles during the siege of Troy. A colossal statue near Egyptian Thebes was said to represent him, and to give forth musical sounds when touched by the rays of the rising sun.

PAGE 110, l. 4. *Smollett's case*: Tobias Smollett (1721-71), novelist. He 'proposed . . . to bathe in the sea, with a view to strengthen and prepare my body for the fatigues of such a long journey' (to the South of France). See *Travels through France and Italy*, par. 5.

1. 29. *Lord Mansfield*: William Murray, first Earl of Mansfield (1705-93), the famous judge. On the outbreak of the Gordon Riots in 1780 the mob burned his house and all its contents, including his fine library and pictures. See *Oxford Cowper*, p. 306.

PAGE 111, l. 4. *Cartel*: a written agreement relating to the exchange of prisoners.

1. 14. *Johnson's biographies*: see pp. 120, 123-5; the first four volumes of a collection of *The English Poets* with Johnson's prefatory *Lives* appeared in 1779. Johnson received a pension of £300 a year from George III in 1762.

PAGE 112, l. 15. *Dorian flute* : the Dorian mode was one of the ancient Greek modes in music, characterized by simplicity and solemnity. Cf. Milton, *Paradise Lost*, i. 550-1 :

The Dorian mood of Flutes and soft Recorders.

PAGE 116, l. 25. *Bourne* : Vincent Bourne (1695-1747) was a master at Westminster when Cowper was at school there. He published several volumes of Latin poems, many of which Cowper translated. See *Oxford Cowper*, pp. 546-60.

PAGE 118, l. 7. 'If a man smite,' &c. : Matt. v. 39, 40.

l. 21. 'Why do ye not rather suffer wrong' : 1 Cor. vi. 7.

l. 23. *professors* : i.e. those who professed Christianity.

PAGE 120, l. 3. *Fête Champêtre* : picnic.

l. 23. *Dr. Watts* : see Johnson's life of Watts in *Lives of the Poets*. Johnson writes : 'His devotional poetry is, like that of others, unsatisfactory. . . It is sufficient for Watts to have done better than others what no man has done well.'

l. 28. *placed him once in the 'Dunciad'* : the lines in the *Dunciad*, Book I, 145-6, which now run :

A Gothic Library ! of Greece and Rome

Well purg'd, and worthy Settle, Banks, and Broome.

were printed in the first edition with W-ly (Wesley), and W-S (Watts), instead of Settle and Banks.

PAGE 121, l. 10. *he has spoken of Sir Richard Blackmore* : Sir R. Blackmore (1654-1729), physician, wrote enormous works in prose and verse, all of which are now forgotten. His *Creation* (1712) was warmly praised by Addison and others. He was one of the four poets who were included among the *English Poets* at Johnson's suggestion. Watts was another. Johnson writes : 'In his descriptions both of life and nature the poet and the philosopher happily co-operate ; truth is recommended by elegance, and elegance sustained by truth.'

l. 26. *one poet* : Cowper himself ; see *Conversation*, II. 245-68, *Oxford Cowper*, p. 95.

Hawkins Browne : Isaac Hawkins Browne (1705-60). 'A Pipe of Tobacco,' is the work referred to here. It is a collection of six parodies, in the styles of Colley Cibber (poet laureate), Ambrose Philips, Thomson, Young, Pope, and Swift—all on the same subject:

PAGE 122, l. 26. *bene vixit*, &c. :

Crede mihi, bene qui latuit, bene vixit.

Ovid, *Tristia*, III. iv. 25.

PAGE 123, l. 23. *In the last Review* : in the November (1781) number of the *Monthly Review*, which was founded in 1749.

PAGE 124, l. 17. *his Solomon* : *Solomon on the Vanity of the World*, 1718. Cowper is wrong ; Johnson devotes several paragraphs to criticism of it.

1. 31. *Henry and Emma* : ' *Henry and Emma* : a poem upon the model of the Nut-Brown Maid,' an old ballad. Johnson calls it 'a dull and tedious dialogue, which excites neither esteem for the man nor tenderness for the woman'.

PAGE 125, ll. 10-11. *the Bacchanals served Orpheus* : under the influence of their Bacchanalian orgies, the Thracian women tore Orpheus to pieces in revenge for his contempt of them.

PAGE 127, l. 22. *Dr. Franklin* : Benjamin Franklin (1706-90), the famous American journalist, philosopher, diplomatist, and statesman. At this time he was in France representing the revolting American colonies at the French court, and encouraging Louis XVI to remain at war with England.

1. 28. *Rhadamanthus* : one of the judges of the dead.

PAGE 128, l. 3. *Mr. Teedon* : Samuel Teedon, a poor schoolmaster, who at first amused Cowper by his ignorant fanaticism, but afterwards gained great and pernicious influence over his mind, and encouraged him to talk of his delusions.

1. 6. *Mr. Griffith* : i.e. Ralph Griffiths, publisher of the *Monthly Review*. See note on p. 15, l. 36.

1. 19. *a viper* : see 'The Colubriad,' *Oxford Cowper*, p. 40.

PAGE 130, l. 20. *sillabub* : a dish made of cream, or milk, and wine.

PAGE 131, l. 11. *peace is at hand* : peace was made with America in April 1783, and with France and Spain in September 1783.

1. 12. *the siege of Gibraltar* : Gibraltar was besieged by combined French and Spanish forces from 1779 to September 1782, when Lord Howe finally relieved the garrison.

PAGE 133, ll. 9, 10, 13. *France . . . Spain . . . Holland* : while England was trying to recover her revolted American colonies, France in 1778, Spain in 1779, and Holland in 1780, seized the opportunity to declare war against her.

PAGE 133, l. 30. *quidnuncs* : gossips.

PAGE 134, ll. 23-4. *Nihil est, &c.* : Horace, *Odes*, II. xvi. 27-8.

PAGE 138, l. 27. *beadle* : parish constable.

PAGE 139, l. 6. *capillary club* : pigtail knotted in the shape of a club, fashionable in the latter half of the eighteenth century.

1. 25. *Swift observes* : see *Tale of a Tub*, section 1, first paragraph.

PAGE 143, l. 4. *netting* : making small fancy-work articles, such as purses, in network.

1. 7. *Mr. Grenville* : William Wyndham Grenville (1759-1834), afterwards Baron Grenville, Prime Minister in 1806. He was returned head of the poll at this election, as a Pittite.

1. 8. *Puss* : Cowper's tame hare.

PAGE 144, l. 9. *dispute between the Crown and the Commons* :

in December 1783 George III, in order to keep the hated 'Coalition Ministry' of Fox and North out of power, made Pitt, then only twenty-three years old, Prime Minister. Pitt almost at once dissolved Parliament, and in the ensuing general election obtained a majority in his favour. This was in a sense no doubt a victory for the Crown against the Commons; though the Crown, during Pitt's long tenure of office, accepted many excellent measures from Pitt which it would have bitterly opposed from the Whigs.

PAGE 145, l. 1. *trousers*: at that time not generally worn by landmen, knee-breeches being in vogue on shore.

l. 27. *Jonah*: Jonah ii. 10.

PAGE 149, l. 10. *I have been at Troy*, &c.: see *Iliad*, xxiii.

l. 35. *Common-scene* in 'The Task': see *The Task*, i. 520-33.

PAGE 152, l. 4. *sliding pictures in a show-box*: i. e. a 'camera obscura' where the moving external objects are imaged through a double convex lens on a surface of paper or glass.

l. 8. *buckram*: lit. coarse linen stiffened with gum or paste; hence 'in buckram' comes to mean 'stiffly'.

l. 20. *corking pin*: a pin of the largest size.

PAGE 155, l. 16. *the alcove*: see *The Task*, i. 278.

l. 24. *described by a certain poet*: see *The Task*, iv. 1.

PAGE 156, l. 12. *Anonymous*: probably Theodora Cowper (see Bagehot's Essay, pp. 24-5).

PAGE 157, l. 2. *Bethshemites*: 1 Sam. vi. 19.

l. 5. *Kerr*: a Northampton physician.

l. 8. *Gog or Magog*: the names of two giants, statues of whom have stood in the Guildhall for many centuries. The names are Biblical.

l. 25. *Tillotson*: John Tillotson (1630-94), Archbishop of Canterbury.

PAGE 158, ll. 3-4. *Freemantle, and at Bevis's Mount*: near Southampton. Cowper was at Southampton with his cousin Harriet and Mr. Hesketh in 1753.

l. 12. *De Grey's*: see p. 106, l. 29, note.

PAGE 163, l. 8. *Gayhurst*: where Mr. and Mrs. Wrighte lived.

PAGE 164, ll. 8-9. *Causidice mi*: the appellation which Sir Thomas Hesketh used to give Cowper in jest, when he was of the Temple.

l. 22. *as Burnet says*: Thomas Burnet (1635 ?-1715). In a book called *Telluris Theoria Sacra* (1681) he put forward a wild theory that the earth was like a huge egg whose shell was crushed at the deluge, when the fragments of the shell became mountains.

PAGE 165, l. 1. *bill of mortality*: list of the persons who had died in the parish during the year. For Cowper's verses

for this and subsequent bills of mortality see *Oxford Cowper*, pp. 365-71.

PAGE 166, l. 21. *The Drop of Ink* : not now extant.

PAGE 167, l. 28. *closes* : enclosed fields.

PAGE 168, l. 1. *half-boots* : boots reaching halfway to the knee.

PAGE 169, l. 19. *Yahoo* : see 'A Voyage to the Houyhnhnms' in *Gulliver's Travels*.

PAGE 171, l. 14. *as Virgil says* : see *Aeneid* ix. 6, 7 : 'Turne, quod optanti divum promittere nemo Auderet, volvenda dies en attulit ultro.'

PAGE 172, l. 2. *joint stools* : see *The Task*, i. 19-27, for Cowper's description of joint-stools.

l. 3. *Pertenhall* : in Bedfordshire, where Rev. John King, Mrs. King's husband, was Rector.

PAGE 174, l. 23. *Dean of St. Paul's* : the great poet, John Donne (1573-1631).

PAGE 175, ll. 7-8. *Hewitt, Bodham, Balls, or Johnson* : the married names of the four sisters, Elizabeth, Anne, Harriet, and Catherine Donne.

PAGE 176, l. 14. *Causey* : paved part of the road.

PAGE 177, l. 6. *So stout* : i.e. such a fine fellow.

l. 13. *hearing* : attendance at church.

l. 26. *the Chancellor* : Lord Thurlow.

l. 29. *Henry* : son of General Cowper.

PAGE 178, l. 3. *Gil Blas* : see *Gil Blas*, Book VII, ch. iv (World's Classics, vol. ii, pp. 21 et seq.).

To William Hayley. Hayley (1745-1820) was the 'Bard of Sussex', author of the *Triumphs of Temper*, patron of William Blake, and first biographer of Cowper.

l. 26. *Abbot* : Lemuel Abbott (1760-1803), portrait-painter.

ll. 30-31. *hollow pamper'd jades of Asia*, &c. Shakespeare, *Henry IV*, II. iv, ll. 177-8, misquoted :

And hollow pamper'd jades of Asia,
Which cannot go but thirty miles a day.

PAGE 179, l. 18. *Johnny of Norfolk* : Cowper's cousin, John Johnson.

PAGE 180, l. 28. *dreams of Pindus* : Pindus was a mountain in Thessaly, sacred to the Muses. 'Dreams of Pindus' are such dreams as come to poets.

l. 30. *Lippus*. blear-eyed : Cowper often complains of his eyes.

PAGE 182, ll. 19-20. *Life of Milton* : this appeared in 1794.

THE STUDY OF ENGLISH

A GRADUATED LIST OF
OXFORD BOOKS FOR USE
IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS



January 1930

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
LONDON: HUMPHREY MILFORD
Amen House Warwick Square, E.C. 4

THE CONCISE OXFORD DICTIONARY OF CURRENT ENGLISH

Adapted by
H. W. FOWLER AND F. G. FOWLER
from
The Oxford Dictionary

NEW EDITION

Revised by
H. W. FOWLER
and Reset throughout

Now ready, Crown 8vo (7 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 5 $\frac{1}{4}$)

PAGES 1,465

PRICE 7/6 NET

Blue cloth, gilt lettering

Also an edition on thinner paper, in Leather
bindings, prices from 10s. 6d. net



SOME PRESS OPINIONS OF THE FIRST EDITION

‘We strongly recommend every one to secure this Dictionary. Whatever they may possess this will be a distinct acquisition, and daily use will make it more and more indispensable.’

London Quarterly Review.

‘It is obviously the last word in school dictionaries, a book so perfect and so cheap that its use must surely become universal.’

The A.M.A.

THE STUDY OF ENGLISH

J = Junior. M = Middle. S = Senior Forms. A = Advanced.

¶ Dictionaries

The Concise Oxford Dictionary from 7/6 n.
Adapted by H. W. FOWLER and F. G. FOWLER from
the *Oxford Dictionary*. New edition.

The Pocket Oxford Dictionary from 3/6 n.
On Oxford India Paper from 6/- n.

A Dictionary of Modern English Usage 7/6 n.
By H. W. FOWLER.
On Oxford India Paper 10/- n.

A Concise Etymological Dictionary 6/- n.
By W. W. SKEAT.

The Oxford Shakespeare Glossary 5/- n.
By C. T. ONIONS. Containing definitions and illustrations of all words and senses of words found in Shakespeare but not familiar in current standard English.
On Oxford India Paper 6/- n.

¶ Grammar

Descriptive

The Gateway to English

By H. A. TREBLE and G. H. VALLINS.

A four years' Secondary School Course in four volumes:

- | | | |
|---|---------|-----|
| I. First Steps in Grammar and Expression | [J] | 2/- |
| II. Grammar and the Simple Essay | [J & M] | 2/6 |
| III. The Essentials of Formal Composition | [M] | 2/6 |
| IV. Style in Composition | [M & S] | 3/6 |

Elementary Lessons in English Grammar [J & M] 2/6
By H. C. WYLD.

GRAMMAR

- Elementary Grammar and Exercise Book* [F] 2/-
By O. W. TANCOCK.
- An English Grammar and Reading Book* [F] 3/6
By O. W. TANCOCK.
- Sentence Analysis* [M] 2/-
By H. W. FOWLER.
- The King's English* [S & A] 6/- n.
By H. W. FOWLER and F. G. FOWLER.
Abridged edition [S & A] 3/-
- A New English Grammar* [M & S] 5/-
By E. A. SONNENSCHNEIN. With exercises by
E. ARCHIBALD. Based on the recommendations of
the Joint Committee on Grammatical Terminology.
Also in three Parts :
I. Parts of Speech, Outlines of Analysis 1/6
II. Kinds of Pronouns, Adjectives, and Adverbs ;
Forms and their chief meanings 2/-
III. Structure of Sentences and Clauses ; Uses of
Forms 2/6
I and II together 3/-
- Standard English Pronunciation* [S] 2/6 n.
By T. NICKLIN. With notes on Accidence and
Syntax.

Historical

- A Primer of English Etymology* [S] 2/6
By W. W. SKEAT.
- A Primer of Historical English Grammar* [S] 3/-
By HENRY SWEET. The book excludes Syntax, but
includes the history of the language, phonology, in-
flexions, particles, composition, and derivation.
- A Short Historical English Grammar* [S] 4/6 n.
By HENRY SWEET.
- New English Grammar: Logical and Historical* [S & A]
By HENRY SWEET. In two Parts :
I. Introduction, Phonology, and Accidence 10/6 n.
II. Syntax 5/- n.

GRAMMAR

Phonetics

- A Chart of English Speech Sounds* -/6
By DANIEL JONES.
With keywords and notes.

Professor Craigie's System for Foreigners.

- The Pronunciation of English* 2/-
By W. A. CRAIGIE. The pronunciation is taught by means of a system of marks applied to the ordinary spelling.
- English Reading Made Easy* 2/6
By W. A. CRAIGIE. A graduated reader.

¶ Handwriting

- New Handwriting Cards*. Nos. 1-10 [J & M] each -/5
Designed by M. M. BRIDGES. The set of ten cards with instructions 4/6
Instructions separately -/6

¶ Composition

- English Composition* [J & M] 2/6
Based on the study of literary models. By A. CRUSE.
- A New Course of Composition* [M & S] 1/6
Based on the study of modern masters of English. By A. CRUSE. A Supplement to the above. It includes a number of passages taken from the works of modern writers.
- An Introduction to English Composition* [M & S] 3/6
By C. E. L. HAMMOND.
- Progressive Exercises in English Composition* [M & S] 3/6
By C. E. L. HAMMOND. With Introduction by J. C. SMITH. Designed to provide work for two years. Also in two Parts: I, 2/-; II, 2/6.
- The King's English* [S & A] 6/- n.
By H. W. FOWLER and F. G. FOWLER.
Abridged edition [S & A] 3/-

COMPOSITION

Précis

- Progressive Course of Précis Writing* [M & S] 2/6
By F. E. ROBESON. Part I, for beginners ; Part II,
Official Correspondence, Minutes, &c.
*Key, by J. A. MORTLOCK 5/- n.
*Application for this Key should be made direct
to the Secretary, Clarendon Press, Oxford, and
accompanied by a remittance ; it can be obtained
only by teachers or bona fide private students.
- A Compendium of Précis Writing* [M & S] 3/-
On Historical, Social, Literary, and other Subjects.
By F. E. ROBESON. ' Second and revised edition of
Historical Passages for Précis Writing, with many new
passages selected to meet present-day requirements.
- Précis Writing* [M & S] 4/6
The above two books in one volume.

¶ History and Appreciation of Literature

- The Rudiments of Criticism* [S & A] 3/6 n.
By E. A. GREENING LAMBORN.
- Poetic Values* [M & S] 3/6 n.
By E. A. GREENING LAMBORN. A guide to the
appreciation of the *Golden Treasury*.
- A Short History of English Literature* [S & A] 8/6 n.
By Sir ARCHIBALD STRONG.
- The Growth of English Drama* [S & A] 4/- n.
By ARNOLD WYNNE.

ANTHOLOGIES

- The Oxford Book of English Verse* [S] 8/6 n.
 Edited by Sir ARTHUR QUILLER-COUCH.
 On Oxford India Paper 10/- n.
- English Verse. Vol. I* [S & A] 2/- n.
 Early Lyrics to Shakespeare. Chosen and arranged by
 W. PEACOCK. World's Classics.
 This is the first of a series of five volumes which are
 intended as a companion work to the same editor's
 Selections of English Prose.
- Spoken Verse* [Y & M] 2/6
 An anthology for Schools and Festivals. By T. HEN-
 DERSON and J. C. SMITH.
 In two parts, paper covers : I, 1/- ; II, 1/6.
- Palgrave's Golden Treasury* [M & S] 2/- n.
 of the Best Songs and Lyrical Poems in the English
 Language. With additional poems. World's Classics.
 A new edition with 32 pages of additional poems by
 contemporary writers.
 With notes 4/-
 Notes separately 2/6
- A Book of Verse from Langland to Kipling* [S] 3/6 n.
 Compiled by J. C. SMITH. A Supplement to *The
 Golden Treasury*.
- A Book of Ballads for Boys and Girls* [S] 2/6
 Selected by J. C. SMITH and G. SOUTAR.
- The English Parnassus* [S] 6/6 n.
 Compiled by W. M. DIXON and H. J. C. GRIERSON.
 An Anthology of Longer Poems.
- Poems of British History ('Lyra Historica')* [M & S] 3/-
 Selected by M. E. WINDSOR and J. TURAL.
 Separately :
 I, A.D. 61-1381, 1/3 ; II, 1388-1641, 1/3 ; III, 1644-1910. 1/6.

ANTHOLOGIES

Verse and Prose

- The Oxford Treasury of English Literature* [M & S] each 4/6 n.
 Edited by G. E. HADOW and W. H. HADOW. Three
 volumes, including critical and historical chapters:
 I. Old English to Jacobean; II. The Growth of the Drama;
 III. Jacobean to Victorian.

- English Verse and Prose* [M & S] 12/6 n.
 Selected by Sir A. T. STRONG and R. S. WALLACE.
 A companion volume to *A Short History of English Literature*.

Prose

- The Oxford Book of English Prose* [S & A] 8/6 n.
 Edited by Sir ARTHUR QUILLER-COUCH.
 On Oxford India Paper 10/- n.
- English Prose Passages for Repetition* [J] 1/6
 Selected by H. A. TREBLE.
- Shorter Prose Passages for Repetition* [J] 1/3
 Selected by H. A. TREBLE.
- A Round of Tales* [J & M] 2/-
 Edited by N. HENRY and H. A. TREBLE.
- A Second Round of Tales* [J & M] 2/-
 Edited by N. HENRY and H. A. TREBLE.
- A Third Round of Tales* [J & M] 2/-
 Edited by H. A. TREBLE.
- Tales of Action* [J & M] 2/-
 Selected by V. H. COLLINS and H. A. TREBLE.
- English Prose, Narrative, Descriptive, Dramatic* [M & S] 2/- n.
 Compiled by H. A. TREBLE. World's Classics.
- English Prose from Mandeville to Ruskin* [M & S] 2/- n.
 Chosen by W. PEACOCK. World's Classics.
 With notes by T. BALSTON 3/6
 Notes separately 2/-
- English Prose from Bacon to Hardy* [M & S] 6/6 n.
 Selected by E. K. BROADUS and R. K. GORDON.

ANTHOLOGIES

English Prose. Wycliffe to Henry James [M & S] each 2/- n.
 5 volumes. Chosen and arranged by W. PEACOCK.
 World's Classics.
 Vol. I. Wycliffe to Clarendon. Vol. II. Milton to Gray.
 Vol. III. Walpole to Lamb. Vol. IV. Landor to Holmes.
 Vol. V. Mrs. Gaskell to Henry James.

Selected English Short Stories. [M & S] each 2/- n.
 Three volumes. I. Scott to Crackanthorpe. II. Lamb to
 Warre Cornish. III. Hawthorne to Katherine Mansfield.
 The Second Series, with Notes by H. S. MILFORD 3/-

Tales of Adventure and Imagination [M & S] 2/-
 Selected by H. A. TREBLE.

Drama

English Miracle Plays, Moralities, and Interludes
 Edited by A. W. POLLARD. [S & A] 8/6 n.

A Dramatic Reader. Four volumes [J & M]
 By A. R. HEADLAND and H. A. TREBLE.
 I, 2/-; II, 2/-; III, 2/6; IV, 3/-.

Scenes from Old Play Books [S & A] 3/6
 Edited by P. SIMPSON.

Six Plays by Contemporaries of Shakespeare [S & A] 2/- n.
 Edited by C. B. WHEELER. World's Classics.
The Shoemaker's Holiday (Dekker); *The White Devil*
 and *The Duchess of Malfi* (Webster); *The Knight of the*
Burning Pestle and *Philaster* (Beaumont and Fletcher);
A New Way to Pay Old Debts (Massinger).

Specimens of the Elizabethan Drama [S & A] 7/6 n.
 Lyly to Shirley, 1580-1642. Edited by W. H. WIL-
 LIAMS.

Essays and Letters

Selected English Essays [M & S] 2/- n.
 Chosen by W. PEACOCK. World's Classics.
 With notes by C. B. WHEELER 3/6
 Notes separately 2/-

ANTHOLOGIES

- A Book of English Essays, 1600-1900* [M & S] 2/- n.
 Chosen by S. V. MAKOWER and B. H. BLACKWELL.
 World's Classics.
 With notes by A. F. SCHUSTER 3/6
- English Critical Essays.* Two volumes [S] each 2/- n.
 Selected by E. D. JONES. World's Classics.
 I. Fourteenth to Eighteenth Centuries.
 II. Nineteenth Century. With notes, 3/6.
- Selected Modern English Essays* [S & A] 2/- n.
 World's Classics. A selection from writers working in
 the twentieth century.
- Characters from the Histories and Memoirs of the
 Seventeenth Century* [S] 6/- n.
 Selected by D. NICHOL SMITH.
- Selected English Letters* [S] 2/- n.
 Sir Thomas More to the Brownings and Charlotte Brontë.
 Chosen by M. DUCKITT and H. WRAGG. World's
 Classics.
 With notes by E. MAXWELL 3/6

¶ Readers

- Clarendon Readers in Literature and Science* [J & M]
 Edited by J. C. SMITH. These Readers seek to fill a gap
 in the teaching of English by providing a varied mass of
 reading matter not too easy nor too exclusively literary
 for boys and girls of 12 to 15.
- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----|
| I, pp. 312, with 32 illustrations | 2/6 |
| II, pp. 288, with 30 illustrations | 2/6 |
| III, pp. 330, with 36 illustrations | 3/6 |

ANNOTATED EDITIONS OF ENGLISH AUTHORS

¹ Q (Select English) Classics. ² Oxford Plain Texts. ³ Clarendon English Series. ⁴ Oxford Miscellany of Prose and Poetry Series. † Non-annotated editions.

<i>Author</i> ¹	<i>Title</i>	<i>Editor</i>	<i>Price</i>
Addison	Coverley Papers from the Spectator, with those of Steele and Budgell	O. M. Myers	3/-
	Essays on A. by Macaulay and Thackeray, with 12 Essays by Addison	G. E. Hadow	3/-
	With Johnson's Life of Addison		3/6
	Selections from the Spectator	T. Arnold	5/-
Arnold, M.	Poems, 1849-64	G. St. Quintin	3/6
	Selected Poems ²		-/6
	Selected Poems	H. B. George & A. M. Leigh	2/6
	†Balder Dead and Mycerinus ²		-/6
	Essays in Criticism (1st Series)	C. A. Miles & L. Smith	3/6
	Merope, with the Electra of Sophocles translated by R. Whitelaw	J. Churton Collins	3/-
	†Sohrab and Rustum ²		-/6
	Sohrab and Rustum	W. J. C. Pike	1/-
	†Thyrsis & the Scholar Gipsy ²		-/6
Austen, Jane	Northanger Abbey	K. M. Metcalfe	3/-
	Pride and Prejudice		3/-
Bacon, Francis	Advancement of Learning	W. Aldis Wright	4/-
	Essays	A. S. Gaye	3/6
	New Atlantis	A. B. Gough	2/6
	Selected Essays ¹		-/6
	Selected, with Essays by Macaulay & S. R. Gardiner ³	P. E. & E. F. Matheson	3/6 n.
Blackmore	Lorna Doone	R. O. Morris	3/6
Blake, William	Selected Poems ⁴		-/6
Bolingbroke, Viscount	Letters on the Spirit of Patriotism and the Idea of a Patriot King	A. Hassall	3/6 n.
Borrow	Lavengro	E. Maxwell	3/6
	Selections, with Essays by Richard Ford, Leslie Stephen, and George Saintsbury ³	H. S. Milford	3/6 n.

<i>Author</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Editor</i>	<i>Price</i>
Browning, R.	Selected Poems ²		-/6
	†Men and Women 1855 ⁴		3/6 n.
	Men and Women 1855	G. E. Hadow	4/6
	Pippa Passes	A. L. Irvine	1/3
	†Saul ²		-/6
	Strafford	H. B. George	3/-
Bunyan, John	†A Browning Anthology	F. A. Forbes	2/-
	Holy War and Heavenly Foot- man	M. Peacock	3/6
	Pilgrim's Progress (Selns.) ²		-/6
	Pilgrim's Progress <i>with</i> Grace Abounding	E. Venables & M. Peacock	5/6
	Pilgrim's Progress, Part I	E. Venables & M. Peacock	3/6
Burke	Selections. 3 vols.	E. J. Payne	4/6 ea.
	Present Discontents, American Taxation, Conciliation with the Colonies	„	2/6 ea.
	Selections, with Essays by Hazlitt, Arnold, and others ³	A. M. D. Hughes	3/6 n.
Burns	Selections	J. Logie Robertson	3/6
	†Kilmarnock Burns, 1768		3/6 n.
	Kilmarnock Burns, 1768	M. S. Cleghorn	4/6
	Selections, with Essays by Mackenzie, Lockhart, Car- lyle, and others ³	R. Dewar	3/6
Byron, Lord	†Childe Harold I, II, III, IV ²		-/6 ea.
	† „ „ I-II, II-III		-/9 ea.
	† „ „ III-IV ²		-/10
	Childe Harold	H. F. Tozer	3/6
	„ „ Cantos I-II	„	2/-
	„ „ Canto III	„	1/8
	„ „ Cantos III-IV	„	2/-
	„ „ Canto IV	„	1/8
	†Prisoner of Chillon, Mazeppa, and Lament of Tasso ²		-/6
	†Macaulay's Essay on Byron ²		-/6
	Selected Letters of Byron	V. H. Collins	4/6 n.
	Vision of Judgement <i>with</i> Southey's Vision of Judge- ment	E. M. Earl	1/-
Campbell Carlyle	Gertrude of Wyoming	H. M. Fitzgibbon	1/3
	†Essay on Burns ²		-/9
	†Essay on Scott ²		-/9
	Frederick the Great (Abridged)	A. M. D. Hughes	7/6 n.
	Heroes and Hero-Worship	P. C. Parr	4/-
Chaucer	Past and Present	A. M. D. Hughes	4/6
	Sartor Resartus	P. C. Parr	4/-
	<i>Canterbury Tales</i>		
	Clerk's Tale	K. Sisam	2/3
	Nun's Priest's Tale		1/6
	Prologue	W. W. Skeat	1/6
	Prologue, Knight's Tale,	R. Morris & W.	3/6
	Nonne Prestes Tale	Skeat	

<i>Author</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Editor</i>	<i>Price</i>
Chaucer (<i>contd.</i>)	Prioresses Tale, Sir Thopas, Monkes Tale, Clerkes Tale, Squires Tale	W. W. Skeat	4/- 4/-
	Tale of the Man of Lawe, Pardoneres Tale, Second Nonnes Tale, Chanouns Yemannes Tale	„	4/-
	Hous of Fame	„	3/-
	Legend of Good Women	„	6/- n.
Clarendon, Earl of	War Pictures from Clarendon	J. R. MacKenzie	2/6
Clough, A. H.	†Selections ²		-/6
Cobbett	Selections, with Hazlitt's Es- say and other Critical Esti- mates ³	A. M. D. Hughes	3/6 n.
Coleridge	Ancient Mariner	M. A. Keeling	fr. 1/-
	†Ancient Mariner, <i>with Chris- tabel</i> ²		-/6
	†Literary Criticism ⁴		3/6 n.
	†Lyrical Ballads by Words- worth and Coleridge ⁴		3/6 n.
	Lyrical Ballads by Words- worth and Coleridge	H. Littledale	3/6
	†Poems ¹		-/6
	Poems of Nature and Romance	M. A. Keeling	4/6
	Poetry and Prose, with Essays by Hazlitt, &c. ³	H. W. Garrod	3/6 n.
	Select Poems	S. G. Dunn	2/-
Collins	†Poems of ⁴		3/6 n.
Cowley	Essays and other Prose Writ- ings	A. B. Gough	5/-
Cowper	†Selections ¹		-/6
	Selections. 2 vols.	H. T. Griffith	3/- ea.
	Poetry and Prose, with Essays by Hazlitt and Bagehot ³	H. S. Milford	3/6 n.
	†The Task, Book I ²		-/6
	Letters (Selected)	M. L. Milford & E. V. Lucas	3/6
Crabbe	†Selections (Poems) ¹		-/6
Defoe	Robinson Crusoe, Part I	A. C. Liddell	3/6
	†Selections (Prose)		-/6
Dekker	The Shoemaker's Holiday	T. Sutherland	1/6
	<i>With</i> Deloney's Gentle Craft		2/6
Deloney	The Gentle Craft	W. J. Halliday	1/6
	<i>With</i> Dekker's The Shoe- maker's Holiday		2/6
De Quincey	†Literary Criticism ⁴		3/6 n.
	†Spanish Military Nun and the Revolt of the Tartars ²		1/4
	Spanish Military Nun and the Revolt of the Tartars	V. H. Collins	2/6
	Selections, with Essays by Leslie Stephen and Francis Thompson ³	M. R. Ridley	3/6 n.

<i>Author</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Editor</i>	<i>Price</i>
Dickens	†A Dickens Reader	Compiled by Mrs. J. C. Smith	2/-
	David Copperfield	E. Kibblewhite	4/-
	Pickwick Papers	Abr. by R. Scott	3/6
	Tale of Two Cities	Mrs. F. S. Boas	3/6
		Abr. by R. Scott	2/6
Dryden, John	Selections (Prose and Verse)	G. E. Hadow	2/6
	Selections (Verse)	W. D. Christie & C. H. Firth	3/6
	Absalom and Achitophel	W. D. Christie & C. H. Firth	2/6
	Annus Mirabilis	W. D. Christie & F. Page	1/3
	Essays of Dramatic Poesy	T. & W. T. Arnold	3/6
	Poetry and Prose, with Essays by Congreve, Johnson, &c.	D. Nichol Smith	3/6 n.
	Preface to the Fables	M. G. Lloyd Thomas	1/-
Dufferin, Earl of	Letters from High Latitudes	F. A. Cavenagh	3/6
Eliot, George	Mill on the Floss	R. O. Morris	3/6
	Romola	C. B. Wheeler	3/6
	Scenes of Clerical Life	E. Limouzin	3/- n.
	Silas Marner	H. Marwick	2/6
	†A George Eliot Reader	E. B. Collins	2/-
Fielding	Selections, with Essays by Hazlitt, Scott, and Thackeray ³	Leonard Rice-Oxley	3/6 n.
Fuller	Sels. with an anonymous life, and Essays by Pepys, Lamb, &c. ³	E. K. Broadus	3/6 n.
Gaskell, Mrs.	Cranford, Cage at Cranford, Moorland Cottage	E. Limouzin	2/6
Goldsmith	Selections	Austin Dobson	2/6
	Selections, with Essays on Goldsmith by Scott, Macaulay, and Thackeray ³	G. E. Hadow & C. B. Wheeler	3/6 n.
	Deserted Village	G. G. Whiskard	-/6
	Deserted Village <i>with</i> Traveller	G. G. Whiskard & G. B. Hill	-/9
	†Deserted Village <i>and</i> Traveller ¹		-/6
	Good Natur'd Man	G. G. Whiskard	1/6
	She Stoops to Conquer	G. A. F. Chatwin	2/6
	Traveller	G. B. Hill	-/6
	Traveller <i>with</i> Deserted Village	G. B. Hill & G. G. Whiskard	-/9
	†Traveller <i>and</i> Deserted Village ¹		-/6
Gray	Vicar of Wakefield	J. L. Stein	3/-
	†Poems, 1768 ⁴		3/6 n.
	Poems, 1768	A. F. Bell	4/6
	Poetry and Prose, with Essays by Johnson, Goldsmith, and others ³	J. Crofts	3/6 n.
	Selections	Edmund Gosse & F. Watson	2/6
	†Elegy and Odes ²		-/6

<i>Author</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Editor</i>	<i>Price</i>
Hakluyt	Voyages of the Elizabethan Seamen: Volume I Volume II Abridged into one volume Drake and Gilbert Hawkins, Frobisher, and Drake	E. J. Payne & C. R. Beazley	5/- n. 0. p. 4/6 2/6 2/6
Hawthorne	Wonder Book and Tanglewood Tales	C. Mayne	4/-
Hazlitt	Lectures on the English Poets	F. W. Baxter	3/6
Holinshed	†Chronicles: Richard II, Henry IV, and Henry V		3/6
Hooker	Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity, Book I	R. W. Church	2/6
Irving, Washington	Sketch Book	T. Balston	3/6
Johnson, Samuel	Prose and Poetry, with Boswell's Character and Macaulay's Life and Raleigh's Essay ³	R. W. Chapman	3/6 n.
	†Boswell's Life of J. (Selns.) [†]		-/6
	Boswell's Life of J. (Selns.)	R. W. Chapman	2/6
	Addison, with Essays on Addison by Macaulay and Thackeray, and 12 Essays by Addison	G. E. Hadow	4/6
	Dryden	A. Milnes	2/-
	Dryden and Pope	A. Milnes	3/6
	with Rasselas	A. Milnes & G. B. Hill	4/6
	†Gray ³		-/6
	Milton	C. H. Firth	2/-
	with Vanity of Human Wishes	C. H. Firth & E. J. Payne	3/- n.
	On Shakespeare ⁴	Walter Raleigh	3/6 n.
	Rasselas	G. B. Hill	3/-
	with Dryden and Pope		4/6
	Selections from the Rambler ⁴	W. Hale White	3/6 n.
	Vanity of Human Wishes	E. J. Payne	-/6
Jonson, Ben	Everyman in his Humour	P. Simpson	6/- n.
Keats	†Underwood and Timber [†]		-/6
	Odes, Lyrics, and Sonnets	M. Robertson	2/6
	†Poems of 1820 ⁴		3/6 n.
	Poems of 1820	M. Robertson	4/-
	†Select Poems [†]		-/6
	Poetry and Prose, with Essays by Charles Lamb, Leigh Hunt, Robert Bridges, and others ³	H. Ellershaw	3/6 n.

<i>Author</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Editor</i>	<i>Price</i>
Keats (<i>contd.</i>)	†Eve of St. Agnes with Isabella ² Hyperion	W. T. Arnold & M. Robertson	-/6 2/-
	Isabella	M. Robertson	-/9
	†Isabella and Eve of St. Agnes ²		-/6
Kinglelake	Eothen ⁴ Eothen	D. G. Hogarth D. G. Hogarth & V. H. Collins	3/6 n. 3/6
Kingsley	Hereward the Wake Heroes Water Babies	A. D. Innes C. Mayne J. Horace-Smith & M. L. Milford	4/- 4/- 3/6
	Westward Ho!	A. D. Innes	4/6
Lamb, Charles	Prose and Poetry ³ Essays of Elia	G. Gordon O. C. Williams	3/6 n. 3/-
	Last Essays of Elia	F. Page	3/6
Landor	Imaginary Conversations	F. A. Cavenagh	2/6
Locke, John	Conduct of the Understanding	T. Fowler	3/-
Longfellow	Selections †Evangeline ² Evangeline †Hiawatha ² Hiawatha †Evangeline and Hiawatha ² Evangeline and Hiawatha	E. A. G. Lamborn . A. B. Gough . A. F. Schuster . A. B. Gough & A. F. Schuster	1/6 -/10 2/- 1/4 2/- 2/- 3/6
Lowell, James R.	†Fireside Travels ⁴		3/6 n.
Lytton, Lord	Fireside Travels Last of the Barons	F. A. Cavenagh F. C. Romilly	4/- 4/6
Macaulay, Lord	†Addison, Essay on ² Addison, Essay on †Bacon, Essay on ² Bacon, Essay on †Bunyan, Essay on ² †Bunyan, Life of ² Bunyan, Life of with Life of Goldsmith †Byron, Essay on ² †Chatham, Essays on ² (2 books) Chatham, Essays on in 1 vol. †Clive, Essay on ² Clive, Essay on †Frederick the Great, Essay on ² Frederick the Great, Essay on †Goldsmith, Life of ² Goldsmith, Life of with Life of Bunyan †Warren Hastings, Essay on ² Warren Hastings, Essay on	G. E. Hadow . H. Whyte . E. Maxwell . P. Guedalla . V. A. Smith C. T. Atkinson . C. B. Wheeler C. B. Wheeler & E. Maxwell V. A. Smith	1/- 2/- 1/4 2/6 -/6 -/6 1/6 2/- -/6 1/- 1/6 -/10 2/- -/6 1/6 2/- 1/3 2/-

<i>Author</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Editor</i>	<i>Price</i>
Macaulay (<i>contd.</i>)	†History, Chapter III ²		1/4
	History, Chapter III	A. L. Bowley	2/6
	†Johnson, Life of ²		-/8
	†Lays, Ivry, and Armada ²		-/10
	Lays, Ivry, and Armada	P. C. Parr	2/-
	†Milton, Essay on ²		-/9
	Milton, Essay on	P. T. Creswell	1/9
	Pitt, William, see under <i>Chatham</i>		
	†War of Succession in Spain ²		-/9
	War of Succession in Spain	C. T. Atkinson	2/-
Marlowe	Dr. Faustus	C. B. Wheeler	2/6
	Dr. Faustus, with Goethe's	"	3/-
	Faust, Part I, translated by		
	J. Anster		
	Edward II	O. W. Tancock	2/6
Marvell	Scenes from the Plays ¹		-/6
	Selections (Poems) ¹		-/6
Milton	Areopagitica	J. W. Hales	3/-
	English Poems. 2 vols.	R. C. Browne	6/6
	Separately:		
	I. Early Poems, Sonnets,		4/-
	P. L. I-VI		
	II. P. L. VII-XII, P. R.,		3/-
	Samson Agonistes		
	Minor Poems:		
	Arcades and Sonnets	W. Worrall	-/8
	Arcades and Sonnets, <i>with</i>	Worrall	} 2/6
	Comus, &c.	Elton	
	†Comus ²		-/6
	Comus	O. Elton	1/-
	†Comus, L'Allegro, Il Pen-		-/9
	seroso, Lycidas, Arcades,		
	and Sonnets ²		
	Comus, &c., <i>with</i> Arcades	Elton	} 2/6
	and Sonnets	Worrall	
	†L'Allegro, Il Penseroso, and		-/6
	Lycidas ¹		
	L'Allegro, Il Penseroso, and	O. Elton	1/-
	Lycidas		
	†L'Allegro, Il Penseroso, Ly-		-/6
	cidas, Arcades, and Sonnets ²		
	Paradise Lost:		
	Book I	H. C. Beeching	2/-
	Book II	E. K. Chambers	2/-
	Together		3/6
	Book III	C. B. Wheeler	2/-
	†Books I-VI. ² 6 vols.		-/6 ea.
	†Books I-IV. ² 1 vol.		1/3

<i>Author</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Editor</i>	<i>Price</i>
Milton	Paradise Regained	L. C. Martin	2/-
(<i>contd.</i>)	Samson Agonistes	J. Churton Collins	2/-
	†Selected Sonnets by Milton and Wordsworth. ¹		-/6
	Poetry and Prose, with Essays by Johnson, Hazlitt, and Macaulay. ³	A. M. D. Hughes	3/6 n.
More,	Utopia. Robinson's translation	J. Churton Collins	3/-
Sir Thomas	Selections from his English Works and from the Lives by Erasmus and Roper. ³	P. S. & H. M. Allen	3/6 n.
Morris,	Jason	E. Maxwell	4/-
William	Notes and Introduction		1/6
North,	Translations of Plutarch's Lives:	R. H. Carr	
Sir Thomas	Coriolanus		1/9
	Coriolanus, Julius Caesar, Brutus, and Antonius		4/-
	Julius Caesar		1/9
	Coriolanus, with Shakespeare's Coriolanus		2/6
	Julius Caesar, with Shakespeare's Julius Caesar		2/6
Palgrave	Golden Treasury	C. B. Wheeler	4/-
	Notes separately		2/6
Pope	†Essay on Criticism ²		-/6
	Essay on Criticism	J. Sargeaunt	2/-
	Essay on Man	Mark Pattison	2/-
	Rape of the Lock	G. Holden	2/-
	Satires and Epistles	Mark Pattison	2/-
Raleigh, Sir	Selections from the Historie of the World and his Letters	G. E. Hadow	5/- n.
Walter	Cloister and the Hearth	C. B. Wheeler	4/6
Reade	†A Good Fight ⁴		3/6 n.
Ruskin	Ethics of the Dust	R. O. Morris	2/6
	†Sesame and Lilies	G. G. Whiskard	2/6
Scott, Sir	†Lady of the Lake ²		1/-
Walter	Lady of the Lake	W. Minto	3/-
	†Lay of the Last Minstrel ¹		1/-
	Lay of the Last Minstrel	W. Minto	3/-
	†Lord of the Isles ²		1/-
	Lord of the Isles	T. Bayne	3/-
	†Marmion ²		1/9
	Marmion	T. Bayne	3/-
	Anne of Geierstein	C. B. Wheeler	3/6
	Antiquary	F. A. Cavenagh	3/6
	Fortunes of Nigel	S. V. Makower	3/6
	Guy Mannering	A. D. Innes	3/6
	Ivanhoe	F. A. Cavenagh	4/6
	Kenilworth	A. D. Innes	3/6

<i>Author</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Editor</i>	<i>Price</i>
Scott (<i>contd.</i>)	Legend of Montrose	G. S. Gordon	3/6
	Legend of Montrose	F. A. Cavenagh	3/6
	Old Mortality	H. B. George	3/6
	Quentin Durward	C. B. Wheeler	4/6
	Rob Roy	"	3/6
	Talisman	"	3/6
	Waverley	A. D. Innes	3/6
	Woodstock	F. S. C. Bridge	3/6
	Scottish Selections from the Waverley Novels, with Ex- planatory lists of Scottish Words	J. K. Craigie	2/-
Shakespeare	See pp. 23-4		
Shelley	†Selected Poems ¹		-/6
	Adonais	W. M. Rossetti and A. O. Prickard	3/6
	†Adonais, Alastor, and Other Poems ²		-/6
	†Prometheus Unbound, and Other Poems, 1820 ⁴		3/6 n.
	Prometheus Unbound, &c.	A. M. D. Hughes	4/6
	†Literary and Philosophical Criticism ⁴		3/6 n.
Sheridan	Rivals	T. Balston	2/-
	School for Scandal	E. M. Jebb	1/6
Sidney	An Apologie for Poetry	J. Churton Collins	2/6
Smith,	Dreamthorp	F. A. Cavenagh	3/6
Alexander			
Southey	Life of Nelson	H. B. Butler	3/6
Spenser	†Faerie Queene, Book I ²		1/6
	Faerie Queene, Books I and II	G. W. Kitchin & A. L. Mayhew	3/- ea.
	†Faerie Queene, Book V ²		1/6
	Faerie Queene, Book V	A. B. Gough	3/-
	Selections, with Essays by Haz- litt, Coleridge, and Leigh Hunt ³	W. Renwick	3/6 n.
Steele, Sir Richard	See also Addison, above, p. 13		
	Selections from the Tatler, Spectator, and Guardian	Austin Dobson	7/6 n.
Stevenson	†Selected Essays		3/6 n.
Swift	Selns. from Swift's Works. 2 vv.	Sir H. Craik	ea. 7/6 n.
	Battle of the Books		2/6
	Conduct of the Allies	C. B. Wheeler	3/-
	Gulliver's Travels	A. B. Gough	4/-
Tennyson	†Poems of 1842 ⁴		3/6 n.
	Poems of 1842	A. M. D. Hughes	4/6
	English Idylls and Other Poems, 1842-55	B. Mulliner	2/6

<i>Author</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Editor</i>	<i>Price</i>
Tennyson (<i>contd.</i>)	†Selected Poems [†]		-/6
	Selected Poems	C. B. Wheeler & F. A. Cavenagh	2/6
	Select Poems	S. G. Dunn	2/6
	Shorter Poems and Lyrics, 1833-42	B. Mulliner	2/6
	Coming and Passing of Arthur Enid	C. B. Wheeler	1/3
	with Coming and Passing of Arthur	„	2/-
	Enoch Arden	„	2/6
	Oenone and The Lotos-Eaters	H. Marwick	1/3
	The Princess	F. A. Cavenagh	1/-
	English Humourists	H. Allsopp	2/6
	Esmond	C. B. Wheeler	4/-
	Virginians	T. C. & W. Snow	3/6
Thackeray		G. Saintsbury & J. L. Robertson	4/6
Thomson	†A Thackeray Reader	Mrs. George Smith	2/-
	Castle of Indolence	J. L. Robertson	2/-
	Castle of Indolence and The Seasons	„	4/6
Walpole, Horace	†Selected Letters [†]		-/6
Walton	The Compleat Angler	A. B. Gough & T. Balston	4/6
	†Selections from the Lives and the Angler [†]		-/6
Wordsworth	†Convention of Cintra [†]		3/6 n.
	†Excursion, Book I [†]		-/6
	†Literary Criticism [†]		3/6 n.
	†Lyrical Ballads by Words- worth and Coleridge [†]		3/6 n.
	Lyrical Ballads by Words- worth and Coleridge	H. Littledale	3/6
	Patriotic Poetry	A. H. D. Acland	fr. 1/9
	†Poems, 1807 [†]		3/6 n.
	Poems, 1807	H. Darbishire	4/6
	Poetry and Prose, with Essays by Coleridge, Hazlitt, and De Quincey. ³	D. Nichol Smith	3/6 n.
	Prelude	H. Darbishire	1/6
	†Select Poems [†]		-/6
	Select Poems	S. G. Dunn	2/-
	†Sonnets by Wordsworth and Milton [†]		-/6

¶ Shakespeare

† *The Oxford Plain Text Shakespeare*

Texts edited for school use. 1/-

<i>The Tempest</i>	<i>King John</i>	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>
<i>Much Ado</i>	<i>Richard II</i>	<i>Julius Caesar</i>
<i>M. N. D.</i>	<i>Henry IV, i</i>	<i>Macbeth</i>
<i>Merchant of Venice</i>	<i>Henry IV, ii</i>	<i>Hamlet</i>
<i>As You Like It</i>	<i>Henry V</i>	<i>King Lear</i>
<i>Twelfth Night</i>	<i>Richard III</i>	<i>Othello</i>
<i>The Winter's Tale</i>	<i>Henry VIII</i>	<i>Antony and Cleopatra</i>
<i>Taming of the Shrew</i>	<i>Coriolanus</i>	<i>Cymbeline</i>

The Clarendon Shakespeare for Schools

Edited by G. S. Gordon. 2/-

<i>The Tempest</i>	<i>Twelfth Night</i>	<i>Julius Caesar</i>
<i>M. N. D.</i>	<i>Richard II</i>	<i>Macbeth</i>
<i>As You Like It</i>	<i>Coriolanus</i>	<i>Hamlet</i>

Plays edited by W. Aldis Wright

Each 2/6, with exception of *Merchant of Venice*, 2/-.

<i>The Tempest</i>	<i>King John</i>	<i>Coriolanus</i>
<i>Much Ado</i>	<i>Richard II</i>	<i>Julius Caesar</i>
<i>M. N. D.</i>	<i>Henry IV, Part I</i>	<i>Macbeth</i>
<i>Merchant of Venice</i>	<i>Henry V</i>	<i>Hamlet</i>
<i>As You Like It</i>	<i>Richard III</i>	<i>King Lear</i>
<i>Twelfth Night</i>	<i>Henry VIII</i>	

Of the above, *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *Richard II*, and the *Merchant of Venice* were edited in collaboration with W. G. Clark.

† *J. C. Smith's Series*

<i>Much Ado about Nothing</i> . Ed. F. S. Boas	2/6
<i>Richard II</i> . Ed. Sir Henry Newbolt	2/6
<i>Macbeth</i> . Ed. H. J. C. Grierson	2/6

SHAKESPEARE

† *Fifteen Plays*

With a glossary abridged from the *Oxford Shakespeare Glossary* by C. T. Onions
On Oxford India Paper 4/-
6/- n.

<i>The Tempest</i>	<i>King John</i>	<i>Coriolanus</i>
<i>M. N. D.</i>	<i>Richard II</i>	<i>Julius Caesar</i>
<i>Merchant of Venice</i>	<i>Henry V</i>	<i>Macbeth</i>
<i>As You Like It</i>	<i>Richard III</i>	<i>Hamlet</i>
<i>Twelfth Night</i>	<i>Henry VIII</i>	<i>King Lear</i>

Songs and Sonnets • -/6
Q (Select English) Classics.

The Shakespearian Stage

A coloured wall picture by W. N. Hills. With Explanatory Leaflet 5/- n.
Mounted on Rollers 7/6 n.
The Leaflet, 2 pp., separately, -/1 ; or -/10 per dozen.

Shakespeare: The Man and His Stage 2/6 n.
By E. A. G. LAMBORN and G. B. HARRISON.
World's Manuals.

An Introduction to the Reading of Shakespeare 2/6 n
By F. S. BOAS. World's Manuals.

Shakespearian Criticism 2/- n.
Ed. D. NICHOL SMITH. World's Classics. Pp. 448

OXFORD

AT THE CLARENDON PRESS

LONDON EDINBURGH GLASGOW LEIPZIG NEW YORK

TORONTO MELBOURNE CAPE TOWN BOMBAY

CALCUTTA MADRAS SHANGHAI

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

HUMPHREY MILFORD

1030

